A Complete Fantasy Adventure Game Magazine

PROTEUS

No 19

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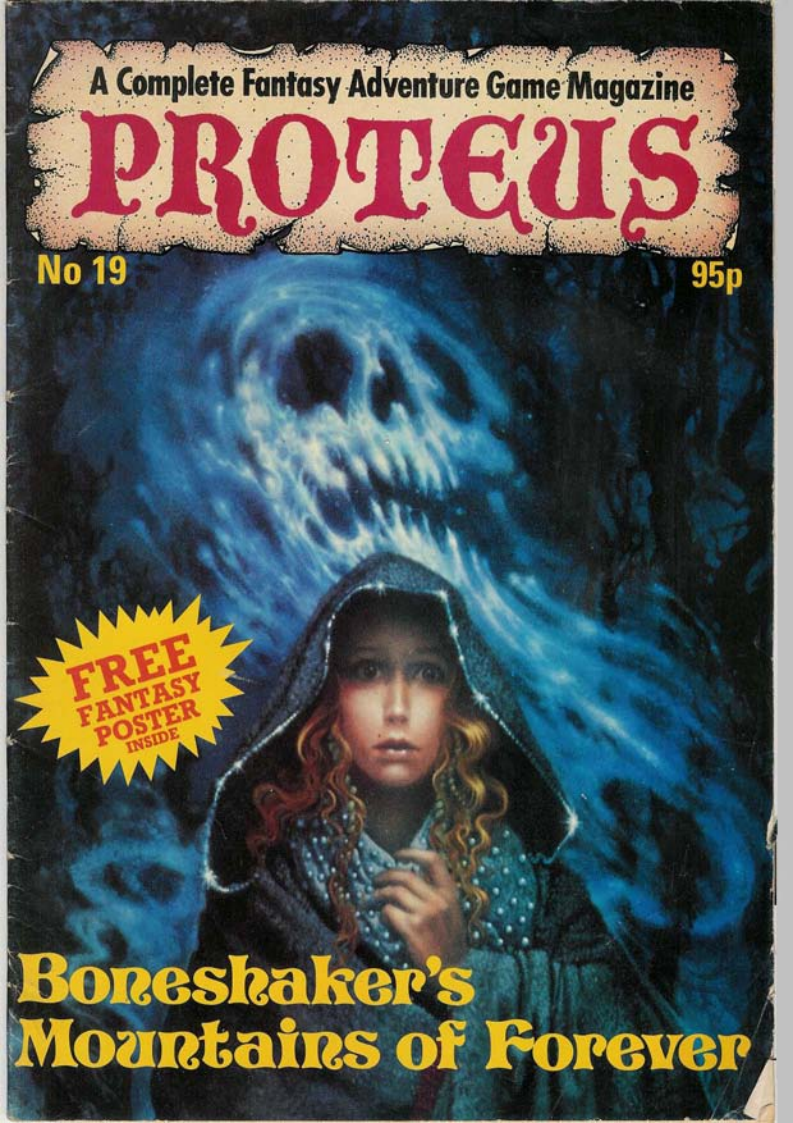

Boneshaker's Mountains of Forever

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PROTEUS Adventure Game Magazine 95p

No.19

Boneshaker's Mountains of Forever

by Ken Bulmer

DICE and a pencil are all you need to begin this adventure—then *you* decide which route to take, which dangers to brave.

As you progress in your Quest, you are likely to encounter various traps, or face monsters. You will also get information, or find certain items which will be of help to you in your quest. You should record these in your *quest sheet* (see page 40) as well as keeping an account of how many rations you have left. As you use up rations, remember to cross them off in your *quest sheet*.

It is important that you build up a map of the way. You may not succeed at your first attempt, but each new journey will give you more information—until you are at last successful in your quest.

If you try to read the magazine in numerical order, it will make no sense. You must choose, when you are given the choice, which section to turn to, and which traps, puzzles, or monsters to face. Good luck!

PROTEUS SPECIAL

From this issue PROTEUS will no longer be published monthly, but watch out for a Proteus Adventure Game Special with more cartoons, more solo games, etc.

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Introduction

You are about to enter a strange and fantastic world of long ago. Weird creatures, mysteries, dangers and magic abound. As an adventurer of some experience, you are strong, wise, courageous and agile. You will need all of these qualities if you are to succeed in your next quest. You may also need a little luck!

Make a careful note of all information learnt, *however trivial it may seem at the time*, during your quest. Your success, or even your survival, may depend on a chance overheard remark or good powers of observation.

Testing your Fate: Your *Initial* Fate/Fortune score is decided at the beginning of your adventure by rolling one dice and adding 6 to the score. During the course of your quest, you may lose or gain FATE points – you add or subtract these to whatever your current Fate/Fortune score is. When you "Test your Fate", you throw two dice: if the score is the same as, or less than your current Fate/Fortune score, you have been lucky. If the numbers add up to more than your Fate/Fortune score, you have been unlucky. In the text, you will be told which section to turn to in either case.

Before you begin the quest take two dice, a pencil and a few sheets of paper on which to map your progress. As you will have to fight many battles along the way, you must first determine your level of dexterity and strength.

Dexterity and Strength

Roll one dice, add six to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Dexterity* score and shows your skill in swordsmanship.

Now roll two dice, add twelve to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Strength* score.

These scores will alter as you go along. You may, for instance, lose strength points in battle. You may restore your strength by eating a meal. One meal restores five strength points. You must remember though, that *your Strength and Dexterity Scores must never exceed their initial value determined by the throw of the dice at the beginning of each adventure.*

Rules for Fighting

On the way you will meet people and creatures you may choose or be forced to fight. Each will have its own Dexterity and Strength scores given in the text.

To resolve a battle:

1. Roll two dice and add this to you opponents Dexterity Score. This is its *Fighting Power*.

2. Roll two dice and add this to your Dexterity Score. This is your *Fighting Power*.

3. If your Fighting Power is greater, you have scored a blow and wounded your opponent. Subtract two points from its Strength Score. If your opponent's Fighting Power is greater, it has wounded you. Subtract two points from your current Strength Score. If both scores are the same, you have parried each other's blows. Neither loses points.

The next round of battle proceeds in exactly the same way. Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 until either your score or your opponent's is zero. A zero means death.

Battles against more than one opponent:

Sometimes you will have to fight two or more foes at the same time. To do this you will normally be told to fight one and hold off another. The procedure then is as follows: you throw the dice for yourself and the first opponent as normal, and adjust Strength scores accordingly. Then you also throw for the creature you are holding off. If his *Fighting Power* is greater than yours in this round of fighting, he has scored additional damage points to you. If his *Fighting Power* is the same or less you have successfully defended against him (though not wounded him), and sustain no damage.

The battle now continues, with each round of fighting conducted as above until there is just one creature left. You then fight him as normal until the battle is over.

Losing and Gaining Points

Sometimes you will be awarded extra points during the adventure. Add these to your score but remember **you can never exceed the initial value set at the beginning of the adventure.** You may also lose points due to some difficult activity. Simply deduct these from your current score.

Replenishing Strength

As you read on you will discover what weapons, additional equipment, money and rations you may take on your journey. There will be sufficient food for a set number of meals. Make a note of each meal you eat, each piece of gold you spend and each object you find. Use your rations, money and equipment wisely. You have a long and difficult road ahead.

Your Quest Begins..

The drums! The drums! The devilish jungle drums beating a tattoo of madness deep into your brain! All about you the hostile jungle night steams with menace, and ominous forms, dark and sleek, splash close by your fragile canoe. It seems an age since you and the loyal remnants of your adventurous crew left your ship, *Dragonchaser*, and set off upriver in the narrow dugout canoe. The foetid smells of the river stink in your nostrils. No one volunteers the thought that you should all land and make camp for the night; the river holds menace, what menace the banks hold is another thing entirely. The paddles make soft splashing noises and the river runs gurgling past the canoe and the damned drums thump and thunder through the sticky heat of the night. The smell of mud and rotting vegetation mingles with the sweat that clings to everyone's skin. This expedition to pursue Corelli the Butcher and take back the treasure he stole from you is proving a nightmare.

As you round a bend Jolly Jim, the Bosun, points. "Look, cap'n. We've got company." A cluster of lights appears on the right bank and as you draw nearer you see hundreds of torches streaming orange reflections across the black water.

In the next instant many canoes surround your dugout

and hands grasp the gunwales and long barbarically-barbed spears threaten you. Your dugout is drawn to the bank and the massed torches show you a mass of clustered people drawing close. The place is muddy, stinking and filled with a tense feeling of terror. You are dragged out in front of your crew before a grandiose two-storyed hut where an immensely fat man sits on an ebony throne. You are well aware that a wrong word or grimace, a misunderstood gesture, could spell your death. He lifts an ivory wand and glowers at you and demands to know what you are doing paddling up his river at night like thieves.

You put on a stern yet lofty countenance and say you are not a bunch of thieves. You say you are following Butcher Corelli to bring back what he stole from you.

This brings an astonishing response. Everyone bursts into howls of anguish.

"Butcher Corelli!" screams the king. Suddenly his fat face sags and he slumps back in his throne. A chant like a dirge begins among the crowd and huge tears roll down the king's cheeks. Wailing and sobbing counterpoint the chanted dirge.

"The Mountains of Forever!" shrieks a bone-thin man dancing about in a frenzy, monkey tails whirling from his waist, skulls rattling against his shins. "The Mountains of Forever are Taboo to us and we may not go there!"

The king and his chief minister roll about in paroxysms of grief. The whole scene is amazing and you and your crew stand staring. At last you are told Butcher Corelli stole the king's two young daughters and the chief minister's son and took them with him when he went up to the Mountains of Forever. The people must obey the Taboo and cannot go after the children.

An ominous note creeps into the shrieking and sobbing. "You are friends of the Butcher. Then you shall all die in his place!" Men with cruelly barbed spears surround you and for an instant you think your last moments have come. Then you lift your hand and shout. "Listen! I am no friend to Butcher Corelli. If you spare our lives we will go after him and bring the prince and princesses back."

There is a dead silence. Everyone watches open mouthed as the king and the minister weigh up your offer. You can see they have given up their children for lost and have little hope you can succeed in bringing them back; but cunning enters their faces. "One person who is not prevented by the Taboo might penetrate the Mountains where a whole army would fail." The king gestures to your crew. "These people will be kept here so that you do not run away. You have a week. Then they will be sacrificed."

You gulp down your immediate protest. Maybe the king is right. Maybe you'll have a better chance on your own. In this tense situation you find a spark of amusement noticing how relieved your crew, apart from Jolly Jim, are that they don't have to go up to the Mountains of Forever even if they'll be chopped in a week if you don't get back.

The Mountains bear an uncanny and haunted reputation; as far as you are aware evil is not involved but simple superstition. Details are soon settled and you are given directions for an early start in the morning. You are kept separate from your crew and in the middle of the night you are awakened by a small figure. Your sword is at this person's throat in an instant and then you see it is a woman smeared in white ash. She puts a finger to her lips. "These bungling men and their big ways. How will you know the children? I am the girls' mother. . ." Here she pauses and her face trembles with grief. Then she gives you descriptions and finishes: "Princess Taleena is the eldest. I gave her a lovely new white dress with gold-threaded pink ribbons only the day before that Butcher Corelli. . ." She cannot go on but turns, sobbing, and her ash-smeared figure is gone.

The next morning you are paddled further upriver and set down at the beginning of a wild track leading north to the Mountains of Forever. You have your six rations in your capacious waistpouch, your leather harness, a sailor's knife, and your good sword Striketrue, a Blessed Blade you have often used to chop skeletons and other ungodly undead in past adventures.

The Mountains of Forever leer over you as you head North from the river through the sweltering heat and clouds of stinging insects.

1

You spoke the truth when you said Butcher Corelli was not your friend—not now, at any rate. Until recently he was your partner in adventure; then he stole all the proceeds of your ventures and took off. You are resolved the Butcher will not hide from you in the Mountains of Forever, haunted or not and with children as hostages or not. You push on, sweating and swatting at the infuriating insects and soon you stand before a jagged opening

gloomy and somehow coldly dank in the heat of the jungle at the South-West of the mountainside. Suddenly a shimmer of blue draws your attention and with sudden shock you see a strange figure outlined in lambent blue radiance hovering above the entrance. You can make out nothing of the figure's features; but it exudes a malignant hostility. You lose two Fate points. The figure vanishes as abruptly as it appeared and you resolutely step through the opening determined to overcome superstitious fears. Turn to **76**.

2

The Shkolnici arches his long neck and you see his jaws are jammed full of teeth like spears. His scaly body possesses two muscular arms ending in rending claws; but the rest of him is jelly-like formlessness and he slides along the ground like a snail—but quickly! He towers over you and his red-rimmed eyes glint greenly. You swallow down and get set—and he strikes!

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SHKOLNICI:	11	14

If you win turn to **37**.

3

TestYour Fate: if you Fail turn to **79**; if you Succeed turn to **179**.

4

The door swings inwards revealing darkness with a swirl of dustmotes shining in the light of your torch. You may go in, turn to **151**, or you may go along the corridor eastwards, turn to **186**.

5

The thing is like a giant toad, warty, scaly, yet upright and quickly intelligent. His jaws are like those of an alligator and instead of webbed hands and feet he has talons that are viciously sharp. Unblinking he stares at you and you can swear he is laughing at you for his hoarse breathing gurgles louder. Then he slashes at you with every intention of having you for his dinner. The speed of this Toad-gator is blinding and the thickness of his scales mean you only do him one damge point per hit.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
TOAD-GATOR:	10	7

If you win turn to **15**.

6

The tunnel becomes darker and there are animal droppings along the centre. You hear a swish and feel a thin band encircle your neck and after that you hear and feel nothing further. Your quest ends here.

7

You wait impatiently and to keep from shouting at them to hurry up you search the Wolfguards and find 10 coppers on each. Finally they nod agreement. Turn to **222**.

8

You step in as the door swings open. If you have the Quattrell turn to **117**. If not turn to **144**.

9

You run out so fast you crash against a statue and tumble head over heels into the corridor. You lose 3 Fate points and 4 Strength points. Now go to **170**.

10

Black bat wings flutter nearer and the great two-bladed axe swishes past overhead. You yell: "One blessed me and kissed me! That is all the proof I have!" Turn to **155**.

11

You rush out as the last of the young people falls and you hurtle into the Wolfguards with vengeful fury. You fight one at a time.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	8	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you win you search the bodies of the youngsters and find only personal possessions. The Wolfguards have 10 coppers each. Now you go North up the passage to **191**.

12

As you run out the door each Wolfguard hurls his spear after you and one grazes along your side. You stagger and just manage to recover your balance. You lose 2 Strength points and one Fate point. You run on South along the corridor and then turn sharply East and run on to **95**.

13

You use the hilt of your sword and you give a good old rat-tat-tat! A surly voice says: "I see you're not greedy, then. What d'you want?" You explain about your search for the children and the voice snaps: "Look at the door and tell me the missing number." Suddenly, making you blink, figures appear on the door recessed into the surface. They are 1 3 6 – 11 13 16. If you tell this crotchety old person the missing figure turn to that para number. If you can't you'll have to try your strength on the grating. Turn to **199**.

14

A few paces down the corridor you see a strong iron door sealing off any further progress. A seaman's buckled shoe lies on the floor to one side. The door is solidly shut and will not open and you surmise this is the door you heard bang and possibly the way Corelli and his men ran seeking freedom. You have to go back to the junction and go North to **116**.

15

You are most glad to have that unpleasant experience out of the way. Now you may return East. When you get back to the junction where you turned West you may now continue on East to **47** or go South from the junction – turn to **49**.

16

If you have Quattrell turn to **220**, if not turn to **132**.

17

You go on North a long way until you reach a junction to the West. Looking down here you see a large door doubled-barred in iron. If you want to go into the room beyond this door turn to **57**. If instead you continue North you soon round a corner going West and go down a long long flight of stairs. The ceiling is vaulted overhead and black and beamed with age and you hear a myriad tiny chitterings and rustlings and your feet crunch into dry crackling stuff underfoot and a rank smell of rotten eggs puffs up. You go down fast until you reach a simple brass door which you open. Turn to **111**.

18

You go into this hopeless fight with high courage but against the black demonic power of Stirkness the Boneshaker your blade falters and fails and you go down into your own dim and extinguishing darkness.

19

The door lets you into a very narrow corridor going East that immediately turns South and goes a short way to a revolving door. The door revolves and you with it and deposits you in an East-West corridor and becomes part of the wall. You do not wish to return West so you go East and see a large ornate door barred in bronze across the passage. You go into the room past the door, turn to **185**.

20

The clicking horde advances remorselessly, yellow bones rattling. You swing your sword bravely: but there are just too many of them and at last you sink down and your adventure ends here.

21

Each Wolfguard has 10 copper coins. You may now go South and turn sharply East, turn to **95**.

22

Past the door to the South the corridor at once turns East and runs for some distance until you reach an opening to the North. You may enter this opening, turn to **188**, or you may continue East, turn to **101**.

23

This chamber is the same length as the preceding but not so wide. There are doors in the East and North walls. The chamber is empty; but a shuffling noise heralds a figure shambling in through the East door. He wears rags and his feet are bare. His face is grey and dust clings to the lines fissuring his skin. But his eyes! They are all white, the pupils rolled up, and they give the figure a ghastly look of absolute abandonment to evil. You are horrified to recognise in this wretched zombie what was once a seaman of your crew who went with Corelli. You lose one Fate point. The only clean thing about the zombie is the spear he carries. He utters a guttural noise and springs at you and you have to fight. Your Blessed Blade Striketrue flashes as you parry the first spear thrust.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
ZOMBIE:	7	8

If you win turn to **164**.

24

The door gives onto a small cramped space with directly ahead another closed door. Over this door is nailed a grinning skull. If you do not care for this grim reminder you may return and enter the left hand door to **121**. If you choose to push on ahead turn to **180**.

25

The room is not overlarge, square, and contains a pile of broken amphorae stacked in the South-West corner. To your immediate left is an opening leading to a corridor heading back North and there is an opening in the East wall. In a niche in the South wall is an overlifesize idol of a being clad in hooped armour, with a jackal-face, harsh of snout and stiff of ear. Incense stinks in tubs before the idol. Standing in the shadows of the North doorway you are about to move off when you hear guttural voices and laughter and the slap of iron-studded sandals. Two jackal-faced warriors enter through the East opening. They are flushed and pant as they talk as though they've been running or climbing. There is an evil note in their laughter; but as they approach the idol they quieten down. If you attack them turn to **165**. If you hide in the shadows turn to **146**.

26

The corridor goes South for a short distance and ends at a heavy iron grating. You give the bars a shake but they are firmly fixed and will not budge. Just beyond them in a dimly lit area lies a seaman's open-toed shoe. You will have to turn around and go back North: turn to **136**.

27

You push through the Puma door South into a smaller room with the only other exit an iron gate in the East wall. It is guarded by two statues of Elephants and is fast locked. There is blood on the floor from two dead Wolfguards and older blood mixed with water from an overturned bucket. If you search the Wolfguards they each have 10 coppers. There is nothing else to do but return to the animal room and choose another door—Bears North to **126** or Tigers East to **71**—or leave the room by the Lion door to the West into the corridor and go North to the ugly pot-bellied statue at **170**.

28

The room is lit by a yellow oil lamp and has two doors in the West wall and doors in the East and South walls. A

girl wearing a yellow dress is weeping over the form of a young man on a truckle bed. She looks up wildly as you enter, her cheeks tear-stained. "He is dead!" she cries. "The Amints killed him!" You try to comfort her but there is absolutely nothing you can do. In the dead youth's hand is a scrap of vellum with the letters printed clearly. The letters are O R E S. When you ask her about the two princesses and the prince she sobs: "I don't know! I expect the horrible Amints took them to their lair where only death lives." You ask about these confounded Amints but she just weeps and flings herself on the body of the youth. Then in a muffled voice she sobs out: "Boneshaker Stirkness controls them, and he has destroyed us." Then she says, wonderingly: "I had to run and hide from one of Stirkness's monsters, an awful Toad-gator thing and it was dropping pretty pink ribbons at corners." Then she forgets you and her tears fall on the youth's pallid face. You realize it is time for you to go. The South door cannot be opened and you refuse to return West so you go East into the corridor: turn to **176**.

29

The spider shrivels as you watch and dries into a husk which drifts to join the earth packed over the floor. You see another giant spider reeling down his thread to attack you and so you leave smartly. You may go through the East door to **114**, the North door to **207**, or the West door to **130**.

30

In the middle of this North-South corridor is a door in the East wall and you may choose to enter here, turn to **158**. Or you may choose to go North to a junction and ignoring the West way turn East to **198**: or you may choose to go South to a junction and ignoring the West turn East to **75**.

31

This room is large but feels larger than it really is. The floor is black marble and the walls are covered in ruby drapes. Bronze-bracketted torches flare along the walls and play tricks of golden light and shade across the two colossal statues of lions each side of the West door you entered. There is a doorway in each of the other walls and you fancy you are being eyed malevolently by the two statues that flank each door. To the North are two Bears, the East two Tigers, the South two Pumas. The doors are shut and barred with black iron and red bronze. You may scuttle back through the Lion door West and go North to **170** and the potbellied ugly statue. If you try the Tiger door knob to the East turn to **71**, the Puma door knob to the South turn to **190** or the Bear door knob to the North turn to **126**.

32

As you lift the candlestick thick iron gratings fall with a smash over the centre and right hand East doors. You control your start of surprise. If you haven't already done so you may now use your sword to get the pearls, turn to **90**. Or you may use the doors remaining open as in **125**.

33

By this time you recognise the thing as an Amint.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
AMINT:	10	10

If you win turn to **83**.

34

You help the girl up and instantly she twists away and flings you a frightened glance. What she sees of you seems to reassure her, if only a little. Her lips tremble and then she sobs out: "Thank you, Narn!" and runs fleetly through the East doorway. You hear a sliding click and when you look again, she is gone. You feel decidedly dissatisfied with all this effort on your part, still, each Wolfguard has 10 copper coins and jackal-face has five silver pieces. The room is uninteresting and you are about to leave when you spot a gleam and pick up a lock of the girl's beautiful golden yellow hair that must have been torn off as she struggled with her tormentors. You decide to follow her and go through the East doorway to **61**.

35

From this T-junction the passage East is blocked by a fall. The passage West turns a corner North and in the South-West angle is a small but heavy iron door with a Wolfhead crudely outlined in dots punched into the metal. If you have an iron key with a wolfhead handle and wish to open the door turn to **149**. If not you go North and very quickly turn West and run slap into a blank wall. Turn to **82**

36

The East passage quickly turns North. If you continue East turn to **153**. If you go North turn to **17**.

37

You catch your breath and wrinkle up your nose and glare down at the enormous body. You gain one Fate point. A thick ooze begins to seep from the flaccid bulk as you inch past and go on to the West end of the cave. Turn to **99**.

38

There is nothing in this room apart from a bundle of rags, a broken spear and a nasty smell. There are doors in the East and North walls. If you go North turn to **138**. If you go East turn to **52**.

39

You form your lips into a circle and blow at the advancing skeletons. Instantly a rushing hurtling hurricane roars into being and envelopes the grotesque army. Away they go, whirling end over end, bones shattering, skulls bouncing like balls, clattering like sets of gigantic castanets, tumbled pell-mell into total destruction. Stirkness glares his fury; but he is not finished yet! Again he makes a ritual gesture and the air fills with nightmare shapes. Turn to **221**.

40

Your torch is almost spent and the lighting along here is not good. The flagstones underfoot are level, though, and you go on for a short distance East until you reach a junction going off South. You may go down here to **30** or you may continue on East where the light is brightening to **198**.

41

This East corridor goes a short way and then turns North and quickly reaches a crossroads. You ignore the West branch as it will take you back. The North corridor goes on for a good way and you can see at the northern end a door hanging half off its hinges. To go North from the crossroads and enter the room past this door turn. to **69**. The East branch goes a shorter distance to a T-junction. To go East from the crossroads and then go North at the junction turn to **136** or to go South at the junction turn to **26**.

42

The corridor is littered with scraps of food and old bones. It goes South for a shortish distance and then turns left. Here it widens and there are piles of broken crocks swept into the sides. Ahead it turns North again and the whole forms a U-shape. In the South of the U is the head of a spiral stair. You may go along the corridor and round the U and go North up the corridor to **137** or descend the spiral stair to **66**.

43

You try the iron door and it resists. A motherly voice suddenly makes you jump with your hand on the latch. "I can see you are not a nasty Wolfguard or a horrendous Amint. If you wish to enter here tell me how many corners the world has". You tell her, and multiply the answer to **4** and turn to that number. If you don't know how many corners the world has you'll have to try the wooden door. Turn to **224**.

44

You half slide half stride with long steps down the slope until you reach a very wide and tall but irregular tunnel going off to the North-West. Torches are becketted along the walls at intervals and the tunnel goes as far as vision enables you to see into the North-West. From where you stand the tunnel turns South and gives on to what you can see in the intermittent light is an enormous cave deep in the rock. The wild tangy smell is thick and clogging in your nostrils now. If you go North-West up the tunnel turn to **6**. If you go South into the cave turn to **105**.

45

This is a very long corridor running due East. As you go along you spot a piece of pink ribbon threaded with gold. You guess with hope for your quest that Princess Taleena is tearing pieces off and dropping them as clues. You hasten on eagerly until you reach a lobby with a passage entering from the West in the South-West corner but you push on through the door east to **208**.

46

The jackal-face screams with incoherent rage and charges.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
JACKAL-FACE:	9	9

If you win turn to **62**.

47

The corridor continues East for a short distance and then turns South and after some distance is completely blocked by a roof fall. There is a brand new passage cut through to the East just before the block and it runs for a very short distance before you reach a door. You can hear sobbing from the other side. You give the door a push and it swings open and you step through. Turn to **28**.

48

The door gives onto an enclosed space with tables piled against the wall and a curtain covering an opening to the East. You sweep the curtain aside and are half-blinded by floods of white light. You hear screams and the soggy thump of blows. The chamber is an L-shape, enclosing the space from which you have just stepped, with doors in the North and East walls. The room contains comfortable chairs and sofas and little tables but all are tumbled about as though a giant has become tired of playing with them. The noise is coming from three men and a girl. The girl wears a ragged dress and has draggling golden hair. Two of the men are Wolfguards and the other is a jackal-faced creature with stiff ears and thrusting snout, cruelty evident in every lineament. These three are flogging the girl. Their harsh armoured harness and metal stark against her softness they are showing no mercy.

Suddenly in the air above you see an illuminated oval. In the oval appears the face and form of a beautiful woman. She wears a tight translucent bodice and short skirt all in silver tissue. Her hair is piled high, corn gold, and threaded with rubies. Her face is mobile and expressive, round and attractive, her lips carmine, her eyes bright with intelligence. She lifts her left hand in what is clearly a gesture of supplication and a request for help. Suddenly that beautiful face resembles a skull. As you stare, fascinated, the sere yellow bones and naked teeth are covered by her quickly flung silken scarf. She continues to supplicate you for help. You have to decide what to do. You may decide to leave via the East door to **122** or the North door to **84**; or you may decide to help the girl against formidable odds – turn to **206**.

49

About halfway down the passage South is an opening leading to the West, which you ignore. Directly ahead, you can see an oak door and you warily try the handle when you reach it. The door opens and you pass through – turn to **174**.

50

In answer to your shout the wall abruptly turns deep purple and an opening of jet blackness forms at the centre. The tired voice is just saying: "Enter," and you are walking across when you hear the scuff of a sandal at your back. You whirl about but a heavy blow sledges down on your head and you stagger and fall. You lose a Strength point. Two Wolfguards have crept up on you. One gives you a kick and bundles you out of the way as the other shouts: "Now at last we can get in!" They push past you for the black opening through the crystal facets. You stagger up and try to shake the pain from your head. You have let Wolfguards into someone's hiding place! You can attack the Wolfguards, turn to **183**. You may run out of the room through the South door, turn to **12**. If you think you have a better method of dealing with the two Wolfguards then turn to **213** to see if it will work.

51

From the crossroads you can see the ugly potbellied idol at the end of the West branch and you do not wish to go back that way. If you go South you quickly run into a blank wall. If you go East, after a short distance the way is blocked by a roof fall. However, there is a passage South just before the fall which turns West quite quickly and immediately runs up against a blank wall. So you will have to continue your quest to the North from the crossroads. You go North to a T-junction. Turn to **35**.

52

A corridor heading East brings you to a turning North but straight ahead is a heavy oak door. If you go North turn to **181**. If you open the door and go through turn to **97**.

53

The casket yields a nice little treasure of 6 rubies and 7 sapphires and feeling pleased you gain one Fate point. You go along the tunnel past a junction to the East which is choked by a roof fall. A waterfall spouts down at one point as you curve to the West and then a little later curve back North again. You are climbing all the time, and now and then you clamber up along flights of stairs. Eventually you come to a dead end. You push up hard and a flagstone over your head swings up and you clamber out and the flagstone crashes back to become part of the floor. The light is reasonable here and you are in an angle of corridors running North and East. If you go East turn to **106**. If you decide to go North the passage runs for a goodly distance until you reach a corner turning East. Turn to **210**.

54

You quickly come across another crossroads, this time an X-shape of six passageways. You stop and think. You've gone a long way from the entrance and have dived deep into the ground. There must be a great deal of living space in the palace beneath the Mountains of Forever and you've barely scratched the surface, yet you feel strongly you ought to press on to the West and ignore any side turnings. So you elect to take the West passage and soon you run across a heap of rubble from a fall. You negotiate this all right and press on and the light grows murky and soon you are clambering through a narrow and jagged tunnel. You have no torch but you are in a stubborn mood and you squeeze on until abruptly you round a corner South and almost fall over the edge of a stone ledge above an enormous cavern.

A smokey orange light illuminates the vastness of the place and what is going on there defies your understanding for you see Wolfguards, rat-faced folk, humans, all rushing about and carrying and toiling and you know they are in thrall to Stirkness Boneshaker. You see the ledge goes around the cavern to the West and there is an opening at the West end. Very cautiously you creep round and at last reach the opening. Inside you give a gasp of relief at avoiding prying eyes. You well realise you are skulking, as it were, in the back entrance along here. Soon you reach an oval chamber with a door to the West and understand why this is the back entrance. In an uncertain blue light a monstrous form rises as you enter and leers down on you. Do you have a yellow, blue and orange sweet? If so turn to **128**. If not turn to **2**.

55

You walk on into a crudely cut cave dripping with moisture and with dampness clogging the air. Just at the limit of vision of your torchlight you see a scrap of pink ribbon,you move forward and as your torchlight reaches out further you see a scaly taloned hand at the end of a scaly arm delicately drop another piece of pink ribbon. You realize at once and with an awful sinking feeling that you have walked into the trap so carefully set. You lose two Fate points. The hoarse breathing grows louder and a pungent reeking stink washes over you. Throwing down a bundle of pink ribbons a grotesque creature lumbers forward into your torchlight. Turn to 5.

56

Test Your Fate. If you Fail turn to **110**. If you succeed turn to **163**.

57

The large square room beyond the bronze door has a musty stone-dust smell. The light strikes down at an odd angle. There are doors to the West, East and South. Long rows of statues lean against the walls. Each one is over life size, carved from black stone, and each one resembles the little figurine you found on Butcher Corelli. As you stare the first statue opens its eyes and stands up and then reaches fiercely for you, talons ripping for your throat. Its back splits open and black wings thrash wildly and in a devouring rush it is upon you. If you have one or two golden candlesticks turn to **129**. If not turn to **33**.

58

Each yields 5 silver and 5 copper pieces. Also one is carrying an interesting little casket fashioned from gold in the likeness of a jackal-face's skull. It is the size of your fist and empty; but it must be worth a bit. Now you may go through the East opening to **115**, or you may take the other North opening. That way, you see the corridor runs some way North to a right turn and there is an ugly pot-bellied statue in the angle. There are two doors along the North passage, on the right: to go in the first door along turn to **108**, the second door turn to **31**, or to the statue in the corner at the North end turn to **170**.

59

Your torch is spent now so you throw it down. Along the corridor East you can see a yellow glow so you head that way until you reach a crossroads. A rank smell of cold evil lies in the mouth of the South entrance, and you shiver. So you may go North–turn to **141**: or east–turn to **175**.

60

The door is firmly shut. You swallow down. Perhaps you should have lifted the grating! If you want to do that now turn to **199**. If you bang on the door turn to **13**.

61

Just inside this doorway is a trapdoor and you guess the girl has pulled the lever to make it safe so she could run across. You hear a door bang in the distance and guess she has vanished into some tricky secret passageway. You cross an empty and echoing room smelling of leather and go East along a short corridor. You see an oak door straight ahead and push through, turn to **174**.

62

Jackal-face has a single gold piece and five silver pieces. You go on West and spot a splash of yellow ahead and, going nearer, see it is a young man in a yellow tunic with green shoes and you guess jackal-face finished him. The young man's fingers grasp the buckle of his green belt and as you peer closer you see he has scratched letters on the stone floor. The letters are "redurn". Feeling sorrowful for him you leave the room via the West door and go along a passage about the same length as the room until you reach a copper-plated door which you open. Turn to **111**.

63

This apartment is lit by transparent circles of fire in the walls and the heat is suffocating. You can see no doors and everything wavers and is distorted in the heat mirages. Suddenly a gout of fire strikes beside your feet and you give a yelp and smartly jump sideways. "Oh!" says a crackly voice. "Your pardon. At first I thought you were a pesky Wolfguard." A bent figure hobbles towards you and despite the man's age he still retains his red hair. "I'm Fangrar and I'm a prisoner in my own workshop unable to venture out." He knows nothing of the children, but then he says: "Perhaps I could help." He puts his fingers to your temples as you bend down at his command and you feel nothing. "You have the power of Fire entrusted to me by my master. You may use it once only. Now be on your way." He points a finger at the East wall, a jet of fire shoots out and a doorway appears. You go through very quickly, feeling the heat, to a very short passage leading to a North South corridor of solid stone. You may go North to **209**, or South to **86**.

64

Ratface runs off squeaking. The Wolfguard has 10 copper coins which you may take if you wish. There are many shelves here but all are empty. You go on straight ahead into the continuing corridor North-East and then quickly turn East and then immediately come up against an oak door. Rather than go back you push on past the door. Turn to **212**.

65

The flame scorches all across your body and you scream and writhe in agony as your flesh melts and drips. You fall. This is the end of your adventure.

66

The stairs go down a good long way, going around and around; but you collect yourself and refuse to be overcome by the giddiness of the descent and by the time you

reach the foot you are ready for anything. A short tunnel goes South and then turns East for a few paces and then runs South for a long way. You fancy it might even run under the earth outside the edge of the mountains. At the South end is a heavy door leading to a room which you enter. Turn to **25**.

67

You climb through the gap and go North for a short distance until you reach a T-junction. Ignoring the way West, you turn East and enter a small lobby into which another passage leads from the West. There is a door in the East wall of the lobby and you hurry through. Turn to **208**.

68

You rush out and charge hell-for-leather at them and you catch them completely by surprise and the first falls at once so you only have to fight the second.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you win turn to **203**.

69

Dust and rubble lie thickly everywhere in this square chamber and the air is musty and mortar dust slakes on the tongue. There are damaged doors to the South, East and West. The North wall is badly collapsed but you can just make out the remains of a door. Two skeletons are half-buried here. Coffins are scattered about, the stone ones shattered and the wooden ones splintered. You look rather sharply about but see no further signs of skeletons or corpses. Your torch throws deep shadows over the debris to the North and a scraping sound draws your immediate attention. Incredibly the fallen stones are lifting, rising, repositioning themselves and in a moment the architrave is whole and the doorway perfectly useable. A young woman steps through holding a torch high.

She wears a short white tunic with crossed golden straps and high-heeled golden shoes. Her hair is blue-black and her eyes the same colour, brilliant in the torchlight. Her face has an elfin look. The instant she sees you she gasps in shock, whirls, and rushes back through the door North. You take one, two, three steps after her and the wall and the doorway come crashing down and the place is a wreck just as it was when you entered. Yet the collapse creates no fresh dust. If you want to examine the rubble turn to **215**. If not, you decide to ignore the West and South doors as they will take you back so you may go through the East door to **119**.

70

The door lets you into a narrow corridor that runs a short distance South until you reach a panel that slides back into place after you step through. You are in an East-

West corridor. You do not wish to return West so you go East and see a large ornate door barred in bronze across the passage. You go into the room past the door, turn to **185**.

71

You put your left hand on the door knob and your right grasps your sword—you push the door open and whirl ready for the tigers to leap on you—nothing happens. The tigers remain looking smug. You let out a breath and gain one Fate point. When you step through the opening the door closes at your back and looks like part of the stone wall. The narrow passage at once turns North and you spot a velvet bag and find nine gold pieces and one copper piece. You wonder what the story of that is! You quickly reach a T-junction but you cannot go East as the roof has fallen in so you go West for a short distance and come to a crossroads. Turn to 51.

72

As you squeeze through you experience a moment of heart-stopping terror as the stone of the wall surrounding the narrow and collapsed opening moves. It starts to contract and you feel the pressure crushing your ribs. Your breath is forced from your lungs. You make a convulsive effort and haul yourself through. You stumble forward with your torch almost falling before you. You lose 2 Strength points and one Fate point. There are only cobwebs in here with the mark of a girl's shoe in the dust leading to the North wall where there is not the slightest sign of a door. You go out the East door into a corridor to **169**.

73

A short corridor leads you into a room whose walls are entirely covered by shelves. Some of the shelves contain dead bodies of rat-faced people. The place has an unpleasant furry smell and as you head for the West door your foot kicks something that chingles richly. You pick up a coarse canvas bag and find 10 gold coins. This gives you a lift and you gain a Fate point. You go out the West door and along a short passage to a crossroads to **194**.

74

This square room has a door in the West and a door in the East walls and two doors in the South wall. A bronze

rail encircles the room a few paces from the walls and there is a crane-like device which has a hook dangling on the end of a chain. Scraps of blue clothing adhere to the hook. The whole centre of the room is filled with sand. Grains of sand begin to slide away from a hump which grows as you watch and with frantic speed lashing feelers appear followed by jaws and mandibles and the head and upper body of a vast beetle. The thing rears up, clashing its pincers, and lunges for a quick snack—you.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT BEETLE:	8	10

If you win turn to **143**.

75

The corridor runs for some distance East and by the time you reach a corner going North your torch is done for so you throw it down. A mellow yellow light up ahead draws you on and you come to a crossroads. In the mouth of this passageway is a piece of pink ribbon and a feeling of cold evil. You step over this warily looking about in the pervasive yellow glow—but you hear and see nothing menacing. You congratulate yourself on escaping from some unknown hideous danger and you gain one Fate point. From the crossroads you do not wish to go back West so you may go North to **141** or East to **175**.

76

You pause whilst you light your torch then, light flickering before you against the sombre walls, you set off North and quickly turn East and reach a roughly-hewn cave. There are openings in the North and East walls. Your light splashes across a pile of brightly clad bodies. With a surprised exclamation you step forward. The nearest body is that of Butcher Corelli! He is not quite a corpse yet, for his eyes open and a weak voice husks: "So it's you! I might have guessed you'd be fool enough to follow me." The Butcher has been mortally wounded and has not long to live. You ask him about the children and he coughs up blood and whispers: "Gone somewhere down there. The Amints did this to us. Listen, I did you wrong taking our treasure, so now I'll repay you. An evil wizard has taken over the underground palace here and filled it with monsters and zombies. The folk here before are dead or hiding, some of 'em only youngsters in yellow, and everyone's scared stiff. We tried to run for it. . ." His voice falters to silence and his eyes close. You shake your head; he just didn't run fast enough. As a matter of principle you search him and discover the only unusual item is an ebony figurine about the size of your middle finger. It shows a man of hideous aspect with a proboscis for a nose and a carapace like a beetle's. You may take this objectionable little figure if you wish. To go through the North opening turn to **23**, or the East opening turn to **219**.

77

The opening leads you immediately to a flight of stairs going down, so down you go into a wash of lemon yellow light that glints back from the pieces of mica in the walls. You plunge deeper and deeper below the Mountains of

Forever. A groined arch springs overhead going North and South no doubt carrying one of the maze of passageways in the ancient palace. At last you reach the bottom of the steps and turn left and shortly enter a small lobby to be confronted by two doors. The light brightens, warm and mellow. To enter the left door turn to **121** or to enter the right door turn to **24**.

78

The golden ring glows on your finger and from the ruby heart of the stone pulses a pure shaft of light that plays over the earth-heaped marble floor. You understand that Ashenar's command of stone needed her mother's command of Earth to function at all. And the ruby-hearted black stone functions as the pure shaft of light sweeps back and forth before the advancing skeleton army. The marble melts! Like treacle it parts and opens and from the gulf thus suddenly revealed flashing tongues of orange hell-fire burst upward. The skeletons topple forward into the chasm in a jangling clashing of bones against bones. In the next instant the marble floor heals itself, swept clean alike of earth and skeletons. "My thanks, Ashenar," you breath. Stirkness glares madly upon you as though unable to comprehend what you have so far accomplished. But the Boneshaker is not finished yet! He makes a ritual gesture and the air fills with nightmare shapes. Turn to **104**.

79

You just can't believe what is happening. You are upside down, slammed onto the stone floor, wrenched into the air, hammered against the walls. Some cataclysmic force has you in its grip. Breathless, shaken, shattered, you are at last dumped onto the ground. You lose 2 Strength points and one Fate point. When you recover your breath you see a gap has been created in the North Wall so you may now go through this gap—turn to **67**; or you may turn and go South—turn to **94**.

80

Turn to **120**.

81

Each Wolfguard has 10 copper coins. The voice welcomes you to enter beyond the wall of crystal facets. Turn to **100**.

82

You grope around the blank wall feeling pretty desperate and suddenly there is a loud click and a panel slides aside. You step through and see the foot of a spiral stair. Up you go and find a similar sliding panel at the top which shuts after you at once. You are in the U-shaped corridor with the first spiral staircase to the South. You've been that way before so you go up the right hand passage North to **137**.

83

The instant the final blow strikes the Amint explodes into a puffball of dust. You choke and spit and then see the next statue opening its eyes. You ought to leave now and ignoring going back West may go through the East door to **102** or the South door to **195**.

84

The door slams shut at your back so smartly that you are struck and hurled headlong by the force. You lose 2 Strength points and one Fate point. The door is just a part of a wall now so you look to see where this secret door has brought you. Turn to **208**.

85

This North-South corridor runs a good long way North to a corner to the right and in the angle stands an ugly pot-bellied statue. There are two doors in the East wall. If you go in the first door turn to **108**, the second door to **31** or walk up to the statue in the corner turn to **170**.

86

The lighting is erratic in this section and you are glad your torch is still alight although it is nearly spent. The South-heading passage swings to the left and in the corner you see a green shoe. Stuffed inside is a piece of vellum with the printed letters E E O U You go on a short distance to a junction to the north. If you go up here turn to **30**. If you continue East turn to **75**.

87

You almost at once pass an opening on your right and, further South, stop outside a closed door on your left. The passage continues ahead South past another opening to the West which does not interest you. If you enter through the door, turn to **172**; if you go on South past the West opening, turn to **26**.

88

The room beyond is murky and you hear a sniffling slobbering sound. You can just make out a door in the North wall. As you press on North a ragged shambling figure appears before you. His eyes are whitely blank. He staggers. You move swiftly sideways, sword ready; but the zombie lurches on. You give him a last swift glance but he stumbles on. You gain one Fate point. You head for the North door and step through into the corridor beyond. Turn to **142**.

89

The corridor goes East for some distance until your torchlight shows you a corner going South. You hear a ghastly moaning sound from the patchy light and darkness of the corner. You may return to **207** and pick another exit. If you stride on ahead to the corner turn to **3**.

90

You flick the pearls to you expertly enough and as you do so thick iron gratings fall with a smash over the centre and left hand doors in the East wall. You control your little jump of surprise. If you haven't already done so you may take the golden candlesticks, turn to **32**; or you may use the doors remaining open as in para **125**.

91

If you have a lock of golden yellow hair from a ragged girl you helped, you hold it up expectantly, turn to **182**. If you have not turn to **18**.

92

You make your breathing as soft as possible and hold absolutely still as a group of weird creatures shuffles in. They wear rags and their faces are rodent-like with large white teeth. They carry steel hooks and they begin to drag the bodies of the Butcher's crew away back East. The torches are held by two guards, large overbearing men with sharp wolfish features dressed in leather brass-studded armour carrying swords, spears, torches and whips. You blink; but it is true. Each Wolfguard has four arms and you realize they will make extremely tough opponents. When the torchlight splashes across you and a Wolfguard snarls a warning to his companion you accept this situation with complete composure. You stand up and unlimber your sword Striketrue. Because of his four arms each Wolfguard gets two attacks per combat round. Fight them one at a time.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	7	8

If you win turn to **196**.

93

You wait silently and the three still arguing walk out into the corridor. You hear the horrid sounds of a brutal and unequal fight and then twenty or thirty Wolfguards appear and see you and you end your adventure right here—only slowly.

94

You shortly reach a T-junction and, ignoring the way West, turn East and enter a small lobby. A second passage also enters this lobby from the West, but you press on in pursuit of your quest through a door in the East wall. Turn to **48**.

95

The passage goes in a generally Easterly direction for some way until you reach a turning to the North and then very quickly reach a bronze door which you open and push through. Turn to **63**.

96

If you are blowing against skeletons turn to **39**. If you are blowing against anything else turn to **200**.

97

This room is quite small and dishevelled—scraps of paper and broken chairs and bric-a-brac litter the floor—with doors in the West, South and East walls. Sprawled on the untidy floor lie two dead Wolfguards with crossbow bolts through them. Fastened to a table against the North wall is a loaded crossbow pointing South. You halt immediately. About four paces from the crossbow and at knee height a thin wire stretches across the room. Feeling you must head in a generally Easterly direction you ignore the South and West doors. If you wish to have a closer look at this crossbow and wire contraption turn to **204**. If you exit through the East door turn to **186**.

98

The passage runs North for some distance and becomes a tunnel and reaches a T-junction where the darkness clamps down like a vice. A couple of paces inside the mouth of the West tunnel your torchlight picks out a scrap of pink ribbon threaded with the glitter of gold. You may go East to **47**, West to **118**.

99

You plunge into the tunnel at the West end of the cave and soon it turns right and then after a goodly distance right again and all the time it slopes steeply down. You believe you may re-enter the cave in which you saw all the mysterious activity but evidently you have either passed North of it or dived deep below. The tunnel goes on in a light that changes from blue to green and back to blue. The air is stifling. You reach a small lobby at last and here the rock is covered by carpets on floor and walls. Closed doors stand in the North and South walls. The door to the East is half-open and a gruesome light falls across the patterned carpet. You step forward past the door and instantly check, aware that you have stepped into the final danger. You stare out over a wide expanse of polished marble floor, completely empty, gleaming in that woeful light. At the far end of this large chamber a rostrum is set halfway up the wall, draped in patterned scarves across the gilded balcony. And, leaning contemptuously on one elbow on the rail is a man who cannot be other than Stirkness Boneshaker! He wears a long robe that scintillates with colour and an ornate golden helm with wings. With a shock you realise he looks ridiculous. But his face—that is a different matter. Long and thin, it is predatory with power hunger.

His eyes burn hypnotically on you. He sneers. "Fool! I have watched you since you passed the crossing of six ways." You swear you catch a whiff of sulphur stinking in the close air. "Now let us have done!" He makes a gesture with bony fingers and from the shadows beneath his balcony pours a horde of mummies! Trailing linen wrappings, heads lolling, arms reaching, they move menacingly towards you. Instantly you remember Fangrar. You stretch out your hands and call on Fangrar's master's command of fire. If you expected a bolt of fire to shoot out you are disappointed. Instead, a vast sheet of flame roars and bellows and rushes across the floor and every mummy is consumed to a drift of grey ash. "Very well!" shrieks Stirkness. "Two can play at that game!" And at once a billow of flame races from his balcony towards you. Do you have a small glass vial of water? If so turn to **214**. If you do not turn to **65**.

100

The opening in the wall of crystal facets closes immediately and a velvet curtain whisks aside before you. You step into a small and aromatic room which consists mostly of a four poster bed. The scents are of lilac and lavender and a frail little old lady lies in the bed staring at you with bright beady eyes. "Well, and what are you bothering me for?" You ask about the children but she says she doesn't know. If you have the Quattrell turn to **139**. If not turn to **197**.

101

You quickly reach a turning to the North and if you wish to go up here turn to **160**. If you elect to carry on East you soon come to a lobby with a door in the East wall. A passage joins in the South-West corner but you go through the East door, ignoring the Westerly direction, to **48**.

102

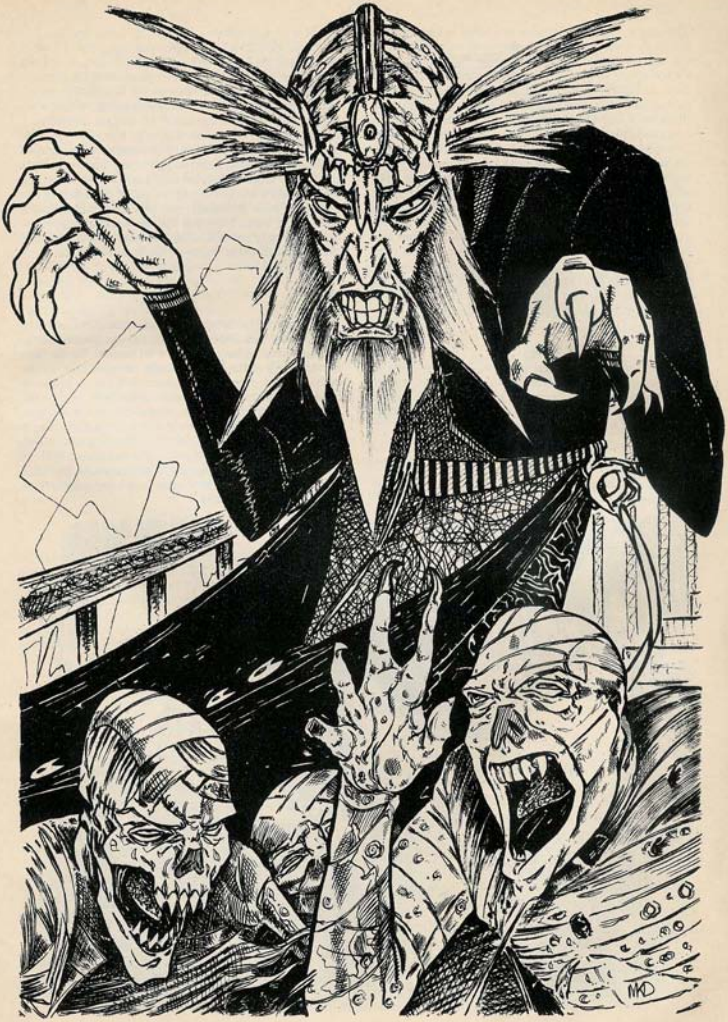
The East passage soon reaches a T-junction. The Southern arm goes a long way to a T-junction and if you elect to go South turn to **123**. The way North quickly turns West and then descends a long long flight of stairs. Overhead the ceiling is vaulted and beamed and black with age and a myriad tiny chitterings and rustlings echo down. Underfoot dry crackling stuff crunches and a rank smell of rotten eggs puffs up. At the foot of the stairs is a simple brass door leading on to the West. If you elect to go this way turn to **111**.

103

You leave Corelli and his people and go through the East opening into the next cave. You have a feeling there are not as many bodies here as there were last time. You press on along the tunnel to the East until you reach a branch to the North. If you go North turn to **116**. If you continue East turn to **14**.

104

Amints! Hundreds of them flapping their black wings from their beetle wingcases, hideous features writhing in anticipation of your destruction, they sweep down like decaying leaves brushed before a hurricane. Many carry barbed weapons. Filling the air with the rushing noise of a torrent in full spate they descend on you. Stirkness can just be glimpsed through the black blaze of wings waving his arms and beseeching all his dark powers to finish you this time utterly and forever as his Amints hiss in glee and swoop. Now is the time to blow!—if you can! If you know the number of reasons why you should blow turn to that number. If you do not know turn to **148**.



105

The cave is large and irregular and eerily lit by phosphorescence in the walls. Weird shapes move sluggishly in the undersea light. Carefully you edge forward and then abruptly halt and press back. Men are shouting and a thing as big as a horse is shrilling and lashing out with clawed forelimbs. You imagine—can it be true?—that the thing has a jelly-like formlessness to his afterparts and it turns and moves like a snail. One of the handlers shouts: "He may only be a baby but he's vicious! Hurry up with the sweet!" Another man rushes forward fumbling with a canvas bag and he throws a small object up. A long neck arches and jaws go clack! "Confounded Shkolnici! More trouble than they're worth." The beast quietens down and they prod the Shkolnici up the tunnel. When they've quite gone you step out and spot a yellow, blue and orange lozenge on the floor. This must be a sweet they dropped in their hurry. There's no other way out so you may go North-West up the tunnel to **6** or climb back up the ramp to the corner past the iron door and go North and then West where you run slap into a blank wall. Turn to **82**.

106

From the corner the passage runs East for a few paces to a turning to the North. Ahead further along to the East you can see across the passage a large ornate door barred in bronze. To go North turn to **125**. To go into the room past the door turn to **185**.

107

A short distance East a branch corridor goes off to the South and ends in a blank wall. Further along East you come to a door and go through to **69**.

108

There is an unpleasant raw stink in this room that gets down the throat. A little fellow wearing a blood-stained apron sees you and gives a yelp and runs around the end of the bench where he has been busily at work with the stained saw in his hand. You go for him and he jumps around the other end of the bench shouting: "It's not my fault! I only do what I'm told!" He dodges around your legs and scuttles out the door. You let him go as you stare about. This is a grisly place with benches running with blood from dismembered corpses and wicker baskets filled with discarded limbs and heads. You see a bag spilling gold coins at the edge of a pool of blood. If you overcome your reluctance you may take the gold and discover 11 coins. Now you may go North up the corridor to the ugly pot-bellied statue, turn to **170**. Or enter the next room along North in the East wall of the corridor. Turn to **31**.

109

The passage goes South and soon turns West and you enter a room with boxes and bales and jars like small urns and amphorae although you see no barrels. To one side an old length of lumber is casually balanced on a couple of boxes and ropes dangle down and you can almost believe this is the mast of a ship, deep down here in the mountains lost in the jungle! On a shelf below are four urn-shaped jars, blue, green, red and yellow. Ropes stretch from the lumber to the jars. If you take the blue jar turn to **120**, green to **80**, red to **205** or yellow to **171**. If you wish to leave this room you may go through the West door where a short corridor turns North and takes you to a crossroads. Turn to **194**.

110

The tunnel grows dimmer and darker and you hear furtive rustlings and suddenly a horrible groaning screech as though the world is falling in. That rusty nail had clearly allowed the warning skull to fall—and now it is the tunnel's turn to fall and collapse on you, and buried deep under the mountain you end your quest.

111

The door lets you into a splendidly large cavern, irregular and lit by phosphorescence from the jagged roof and from a glaring orange glow from the floor. The whole floor seethes and writhes and dense sulphurous fumes rise and choke in your throat. You can just make out two doors in the East side and an opening to a tunnel on the West. A narrow hanging bridge of rope and wooden slats crosses to the far side and the centre of the bridge hangs perilously low to the seething floor. You see no other way of crossing and, as ever, you hardly care to trust a rope bridge. Still, off you must go if you are to save the princesses and the prince. You start off and the bridge begins its damned pendulum swing no matter how much you try to hold steady. Test Your Fate. If you Fail turn to **162**. If you succeed turn to **140**.

112

The passage North takes you through an opening into a greenly lit chamber longer East and West than it is wide North and South. As you step through a stone slab falls at your back and you see other slabs along the walls. The only exit is in the West wall and you begin to walk towards it. A jackal-faced creature in armour with stiff ears and arrogant snout steps forward to stop you. Turn to **46**.

113

You step through into a tiny space and a thick iron grating falls with a smash at your back. In the weird blue light of the candles you see ahead a solid iron door. You turn around awkwardly in the confined space and see that from this side if you could just lift the grating out of its sockets you could swing it aside. If you do this turn to **199**. If you try the door turn to **60**.

114

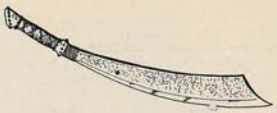
This door leads to a long corridor going East. Halfway along you stumble across the skeleton of a being you cannot recognise althouth it is not human. There is a superb emerald necklace around the bones and you may take this if you wish. You go on East and reach a small lobby. A passage comes in from the West in the North-West corner but you ignore this and elect to go through the East door to **48**.

115

The opening leads on to a corridor that runs for a good way East and then you reach a flight of steps curving in a semicircle to the North and leading down deeper. You go down carefully for the light here is tricky. You move a little way North and then halt for a stealthy stirring sounds ahead and then you see the flat serpent head lift and the tongue flicker and the glassy eyes fix you with a hypnotic stare. The giant serpent is coiled about a bronze casket. To pass you must fight.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT SERPENT:	9	8

If you win turn to **53**.



116

A short corridor leading North brings you to a turning East but straight ahead is a heavy oak door. If you go East turn to **41**. If you open the door and go through turn to **97**.

117

You are in a small square room with a door to the North. A weird looking little fellow dances before you. His white hair blows about as though in a breeze although you can feel no wind. His clothes are of all colours and hang in streamers flapping everywhere. "I know nothing of these children," he says, and then goes on: "My master entrusted me with Air and I am forever being blown about. Earth and Stone he entrusted to two people, but not Air, oh dear no!" At this he rises gently upwards, flaps about, and slowly descends. You can quite see why he's irascible. "Perhaps some Air will help in your quest". You look startled at this; but he laps a hand and says: "You may use it once so use it wisely. Mayhap you can help my master, after all, as well." He blows gently on your lips. "When you need it just say there are ninety six good reasons for blowing—and blow!" You thank him and he purses his lips and blows at the East wall and a door forms at once. You go out into a North-South corridor under stark white light. There is an opening directly ahead to **77**. At the North and South ends of the corridor are bronze doors and to go into the room past the North door turn to **57** and the South to **185**.

118

You go on West for some way and hear a grunting gusting noise like a vast breathing from the darkness ahead. You may turn around and go back to the junction and head East to **47**. Or you may lift your torch and move forward past another scrap of pink ribbon into the darkness ahead. Turn to **55**.

119

Past the door the East passage soon reaches a T-junction. A short distance up the left passage is a closed bronze door and to enter here turn to **74**. To go right down the beginning of a fairly long passage turn to **166**.

120

You lift the jar and the ship's mast crashes down, smashing all the jars and giving you a thwack over the head. You lose 2 Strength points and one Fate point. Through the West door a short corridor takes you right to a crossroads. Turn to **194**.

121

The door gives on to a small cramped space with directly ahead another closed door. Over this door is nailed a grinning skull. If you do not care for this grim reminder you may return and enter the left hand door to **24**. If you choose to push on ahead turn to **88**.

122

The instant you step through the doorway the floor falls away beneath you. You drop with stunning force and you can still hear the screams of the girl ringing in your ears. You smash heavily into the ground and dust billows up all about you. Spiders drop to scuttle through your hair. You lose 3 Strength points and one Fate point. At last you summon strength to clamber out and you walk East across an empty and echoing room smelling of leather and go on East along a short corridor. You see an oak door straight ahead and push through. Turn to **174**.

123

Looking down the West branch you can see a door double-barred in iron. If you wish to go past this door into the room beyond turn to **185**. If instead you turn left and go East turn to **153**.

124

"You may call on me easily enough; but how do I know you are worthy of my help?" Well, are you worthy of help? If you have helped a ragged girl in distress, turn to **91**. If you have not the whispering voice ceases and you must face Stirkness Boneshaker in the final conflict. Turn to **18**.

125

Halfway along the corridor is a door to the East and you go through warily to find a small square room with three open doorways in the East wall and one open doorway in each of the North and South walls. The walls are covered in tapestries and a spindle-legged table stands before you with a spindle-legged chair at the side. In the chair sits a young woman with long silver hair threaded with pearls. She wears a silver gown and silver stockings and silver shoes and her face is without colour. The only colour about her is the green belt about her slender waist. On the table is a beautiful golden box with the lid thrown back and a string of pearls draped over the side. Each side of the box is a tall golden candlestick whose candles burn with a weird blue fire. Inside the golden box is coiled a small and deadly snake. You see plainly now the girl is dead and you feel sorrow for a young life cut so short. You take a breath and shake your shoulders; you have a quest to pursue! The toiletry articles on the table hold no interest for you at the moment. Now you may go through any of the doorways. The North to **135**, the South to **70**. In the East wall you may go through the left hand doorway to **201**, the centre to **113** or the right to **19**. You may take the golden candlesticks, turn to **32**; or you may use the tip of your sword to flick the pearls draped over the box to you without disturbing the snake, turn to **90**.

126

You put one hand on the door knob and the other grasps your sword—you push the door open and whirl ready for the bears to leap on you—nothing happens. The bears remain silent and cold and looking smug. You let out a breath and gain a Fate point. You step into the North corridor and at once your foot hits against a loose flagstone. You tense expecting a trap but after a time nothing has fallen on you and you have not fallen into a pit, though the door has closed, seeming a blank wall from this side; you check the flagstone and find under it a nice little hoard of six diamonds, two rubies and three sapphires. This pleases you and you go on North along a very short corridor to a crossroads. Turn to **51**.

127

You make it into the first cave and then your feet trip over a body and you fall with a smash. You discover the stone floor is very hard indeed. You lose 2 Strength points. After a time you can hear nothing apart from your own breathing so you relight your torch. Now you may go back through the East opening to **103** or go through the North opening to **38**.

128

This Shkolnici is three times the size of the baby and he's mad clean through! You hurriedly throw him a sweet and his long neck arches and his jaws go Clack! and then he slumps back against the wall. You wait, not sure if the sweet will work on so vast a bulk; but he quietens down and then dozes off so you can pick a careful way past his glutinous bulk and outspread claws and reach the opposite end of the cave. Turn to **99**.

129

A tall golden candlestick hanging about one's person tends to get in the way. You deduct two Dexterity points for this combat. By now you recognise that this flying thing must be an Amint.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
AMINT:	10	10

If you win turn to **83**.

130

In this North-South corridor you may go North past a turning to the West and enter past a bronze door to **74**, or you may turn South and again ignoring a West passage go on South to **26**.

131

The moment your final blow lands the pair of black pumas instead of slumping to the marble floor spring upright and resume their guardian stances each side of the door. If you have fought a pair of jackle faces beside a jackle-faced idol or if you have seen a little fellow with a blood stained apron turn to **27**. If you have done neither of these things turn to **177**.

132

Through the iron door you enter a comfortable chamber with a huge four poster bed and amenities. The woman in the bed is old but she has a motherly presence and her eyes twinkle on you although she is clearly as afraid as everyone else. She cannot help with the children, then she touches your forehead and you gain 2 Strength points. "You must just do what you can," she says. You thank her and return past the iron door and exit via the wooden door North which locks itself after you. You turn East in the corridor and start to worry about your torch. Turn to **59**.

133

You give the lever a sharp pull and immediately the dead naked body of a rat-faced person slides from the round opening and stretches out on the table before you. The shock makes you jump. You lost a Fate point. You pull the blue lever but it is locked fast. Nothing else happens. So you push on West to a short corridor that turns South and brings you at once to a crossroads. Turn to **194**.

134

Stirkness Boneshaker whips out a curved sword and rushes for you across the marble. Shrivelled from his Amint form he may be and no longer charged with

sorcerous energy. he remains a formidable and potent foeman. As your blades clash you understand you are in for a mighty battle.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
STIRKNESS BONESHAKER:	11	14

If you win turn to **168**.

135

The door lets you into a narrow corridor smelling of plaster. Shortly you have to step over a bucket containing hardened plaster. The East wall shows clear signs of a recent walling up and you detect a finger bone sticking out of the wall. With a little shiver you go on North and step through a revolving doorway that shuts after you to become part of a passage's wall. In this East-West corridor you have no desire to go back West so you head East to a large ornate door barred in bronze across the corridor. You go into the room past the door, turn to **57**.

136

This North-heading passage soon brings you to a closed door on your right. You can see the passage goes on some way North and passes a turning to the West which you will ignore and ends at a closed bronze door. To enter the door on your right turn to **172**. To enter the bronze door to the North turn to **74**.

137

The passage runs North for almost the same distance you came South down the other side of the U and then turns East and you come to a blank wall. Before you become alarmed you spot an iron handle and see the runners top and bottom. You heave on the handle and a panel of stone slides to your left. When you step through the opening you see the panel is the same stone as the corridor. Now you may go a shortish way South to a corner to the East, turn to **106**, or a longer way North past a West opening you ignore to a corner going East, turn to **210**.

138

Past the door the tunnel heads North before turning North-East and opening out into a chamber where a man with wolf's features is flogging an unresisting man. The latter has a rodent face and wears rags and the whip bites. The wolfman wears brass-studded leather armour and the moment you appear he hurls a spear at you. He has four arms. You feel the spear slice along your arm and you lose 2 Strength points and then your blades clash. Because of the wolfman's four arms he gets two attacks per combat round.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you win turn to **64**.

139

"That awful Stirkness has probably taken them into his lair," she says, sounding exhausted. She tells you the acolytes are frightened to venture into what was their palace and only the brave youngsters in their yellow tunics are trying to help. Suddenly she says: "If you help us we will help you." You nod and then wince. "Tut-tut," she clicks her tongue. "Your poor head." A basin of water beside the bed suddenly bubbles up all on its own and shoots a jet of water which carefully bathes your head. You gain a Strength point. "My master entrusted me with Water," she explains. "Come here." She puts out her withered hand and touches your temples. You don't feel any different. She gives you a small glass vial of water. "If you need Water then you will receive it. But

our strength and power are limited so you will only have Water once. Now go and let me sleep." You thank her and see a door in the East wall you'd swear wasn't there before and go through and along a short passage East until you come to a bronze door. You go through. Turn to **63**.

140

The bridge swings like a maddened horse; but you quieten it down and breathing unsteadily at last reach the opposite side. Turn to **192**.

141

The pleasant yellow light continues as you go North and then turn East for a fair way until you reach a T-junction. Another piece of the pink ribbon lies here and you step over it carefully. Now you may go South down the corridor for some distance, turn to **157**, or you may go North for a shorter distance to a corner going East, turn to **210**.

142

The North passage takes you into a greenly lit chanber longer East and West than it is wide North and South. As you step in a stone slab falls at your back and you see there are other stone slabs along the walls. The only exit is in the West wall and you begin to walk towards it. A jackal- faced man wearing armour, with stiff ears and arrogant snout, steps forward to stop you. Turn to **46**.

143

The beetle's body slides back to vanish and immediately another hump appears in the sand and you decide to leave quicker than you came in. You may go through any of the doors. In the South wall as you look at it, the left hand door to **207**, the right hand to **87**, or the East door to **45**.

144

You are in a small square room with a door to the North. A weird looking little fellow dances before you. His white hair blows about as though in a breeze although you can feel no wind. His clothes are of all colours and hang in flapping streamers. "I know nothing about these children," he says, "but I wish you well in your search." He touches your forehead and you gain two Strength points. "I would advise you to beware of the Amints, horrible creatures who fly to attack you." You thank him and he shows you out to the North along the passage that leads you to a secret door. When you step through the door slams at your back to become part of the wall. Now you press on East a short distance to a bronze door. You open the door and step through. Turn to **57**.

145

The North passage brings you to a door which you open cautiously. The East wall of this room is a single slab of crystal facets that makes your eyes water. The floor is covered with a jumble of broken statues of mermaids and tritons. Making you jump a whispering voice says: "You are not a Wolfguard or a jackal-face. Can I trust you?" Naturally you say yes. "H'm, well we shall see. If SHUT is sixty eight tell me what OPEN is." If you give the answer turn to that number. If you cannot say you may turn around and go out the South door, turn to **216**.

146

The two jackal-face exit to the North and do not see you

and you let out your breath telling yourself that only a fool fights unnecessarily. Now you may go through the second North opening to the corridor, turn to **85**, or through the opening East and the corridor running East there to **115**.

147

You walk past Corelli the Butcher and shake your head, and go North into the next cave which has nothing in it apart from a bundle of rags, a foul smell and a broken spear. You may go through the two doors here, the North to **138** or the East to **52**.

148

You turn and try to run and the Amints swoop down and you are snatched aloft in cruel curved claws. Hissing their glee they toss you from one to another and this is the end of your adventure.

149

You use the key to open the door and a gust of a wild raw untamed scent puffs out chokingly. You see a long ramp sloping steeply down into the rock to the South-West with a flickering green light pulsing up. If you wish you may descend this ramp, turn to **44**. Or you may go on North and very quickly turn West and run slap into a blank wall. Turn to **82**.

150

The North passage soon turns West and you quickly enter a spare room with a single table in the centre and the end of a round wooden cylinder projecting down from the ceiling above. Beside the left of the table are two levers, one red, one blue. At the right side is an array of knives and saws. There is a taint of rottenness on the air. If you pull the red lever turn to **133**. If you pull the blue lever turn to **184**. Or you may leave this sinister room by the West door and along the West corridor and quickly turn South to a crossroads. Turn to **194**.

151

The moment you step inside the door disappears at your back and the ceiling becomes illuminated by crystalline yellow radiance filling a large chamber with light. You can see no doors. At the far end is a huge four poster bed draped in dusty ruby-coloured velvet. The rest of the furnishings are meagre but adequate. A shrunken figure lies in the bed and as you approach it raises itself on an elbow and startlingly blue eyes bore into you. The elementalist pants for breath and his robe barely moves with his breathing. "I am Flavian known as Greenfingers. The vile necromancer Stirkness known as the Boneshaker has ruined me, taking my place in the Mountains of Forever. But I have fooled him. I have split my powers into five and five of my acolytes each has a single part." Here Flavian tries to laugh and only a weak cough gurgles out. "I hide here and my acolytes hide where they can. Some of my neophytes believe Narn would help us if we knew how to reach her. You'll know the youngsters by their green shoes."

You see the toes of two green shoes peeping out from under the bed. He goes on weakly: "One day we will find a champion to gather all the powers together and perhaps call on Narn and destroy Stirkness Boneshaker utterly and for ever." He pants for breath and you cut in quickly to ask about the two princesses and the prince. "No. I can only guess they would have been taken into Boneshaker's lair. You mean well so I wish you good fortune. This might aid if you find my acolytes." Tremblingly he puts into your hands a small bronze crossed-shaped object, with blue, orange, brown and white arms. "This is the Quattrell, guard it well." His head rolls to the side and he looks at the North wall and with his elementalist skills remaining moulds the rock to form a door. "Go now and let me sleep." You leave rapidly by this strange portal and it clashes out of existence as you step into a corridor going North. Turn to **223**.

152

The passage immediately turns East and goes for some way. You spot a scrap of pink ribbon threaded with gold and you guess with hope for your quest that Princess Taleena is tearing pieces off and dropping them as clues. You hasten on eagerly until you reach a turning to the South which will take you back the way you've come as it almost immediately swings West. You enter a lobby and ignoring a passage coming in from the West in the North-West corner you push on through the door East to **208**.

153

The tunnel remains well lit for a way and then the light dims and dampness scrapes at your throat. You see a skull on the floor with a rusty bent nail through one eye. If you wish to turn around and go back to the junction and go North turn to **17**. If you continue on East turn to **56**.

154

Again his bony fingers make an arcane gesture and you hear the clicking clacking from the shadows and then you see the army of skeletons marching out towards you from under the rostrum. Their seer bones glint in the pallid light and some still have remnants of grey flesh trailing from joints. The bald skulls all turn as one and blank eyesockets regard you—and sparking green light flashes in those empty orbits! Stiffly the army of skeletons advances to rend you limb from limb. If you have a small wooden box of earth and wish to use it now turn to **173**. If you would like to use Air now and know the number of reasons why you should blow you say it and go to that number. If you can do neither of these things turn to **20**.

155

A glowing oval of golden light blooms into life hovering in midair and Narn's voice pulses through with commanding power. She looks more lovely than ever and with her voluptuous body in its silver tissue and her rosy face and golden hair—yet even as you watch so those beautiful features writhe into a grinning skull. But now Narn doesn't care! "You destroyed me, Stirkness Boneshaker and humiliated my hand maidens and now the hour of your retribution is at hand, for I have found a champion!" Stirkness swoops around flapping his black wings, and you sense the sudden uncertainty in the Boneshaker. "Begone!" he screams. "Back to the grave!" You watch holding your breath as these two struggle for supremacy. The golden oval light fades and then glows more strongly. Stirkness drops to the floor and his axe clangs against the marble as though suddenly too heavy for him. His body shrivels and lessens and his hideous Amint face sloughs like dough and reshapes itself into his own human face, long and thin and mean. His wings shrivel and the beetle-like wingcases crack and no longer thrust out his robe. He is an ordinary man facing you as Narn laughs peals of golden laughter. "Fight now, Boneshaker Stirkness! Fight without your sorcerous powers to aid you! Fight my champion!" Turn to **134**.

156

Congratulations! Whatever your scheme was, it worked, for the two Wolfguards have vanished. The voice welcomes you to enter beyond the crystal facets. Turn to **100**.

157

The corridor continues South and at the end you reach a corner to the East. Turn to **106**.

158

The door slams at your back and absolute darkness falls with only the feeble spark of your torch to relieve the gloom. You grope forward and thankfully see a door in the East wall. On the door is painted a sickle. You open the door and a shaft of green light springs out together with a fresh flower scent. In you go, torch high, sword ready, staring about, the breath short in your throat. The green light reveals what you take to be a park—here in the depths of the mountains! There are trees and shrubs, multi-coloured and scented flowers and row after row of vegetables. A gravel path leads forward to the East and you advance cautiously as the path turns North-East and eventually brings you to the corner of this vast chamber. There is a wooden door in the angle of the North wall and an iron door in the angle of the East wall. If you try the wooden door turn to **224**. If you try the iron door turn to **43**.

159

You give the Wolfguards a kick to show your contempt of them and help the girl up. She wipes her eyes and smoothes back that beautiful hair. "We handmaids of Narn are humiliated and treated so badly now she is gone," she says, choking back her sobs "If only the neophytes in their yellow tunics could find all the way to get through—their elders seem so helpless—perhaps, then—" She turns to you abruptly and gives you a soft kiss on the cheek. "May the Tenfold Blessings of Narn be upon you." You put a hand to your cheek feeling touched. You are about to leave and confront the statue room again when she shakes her head and leads you to the South wall. She presses a knob and a panel slides open. As you go through South she whispers: "Perhaps you are the champion we all need for Narn." She closes the panel on you. This room is a most grisly place with discarded limbs and heads in wicker baskets and benches running with congealing blood. The smell is highly unpleasant. You hurry through the West door into the corridor and go North straight away to the ugly pot-bellied statue in the North corner. Turn to **170**.

160

The passage goes North for a short distance and your torchlight shows you a corner going West. You hear a ghastly moaning sound from the patchy light and darkness of the corner. If you decide to lift up your torch and stride into the patchy half-light, turn to **3**. If instead you elect to turn back South again, away from the ominous shadows, turn to **187**.

161

The smell of grease hangs thickly in the air here as you enter a kitchen in a wild state of disorder. Pans and kitchen implements are scattered everywhere. There is nothing here to aid you in your search. In the East wall is a door with a handle, sliding in runners, and you slide it to the right and step through into the corridor and see the door is faced with the same stone as the wall. You may go South a short distance to a corner going East, turn to **106**, or you may go North for a longer distance and ignoring a turning on your left reach a corner going East, turn to **210**.

162

As you guessed, the bridge slings you over the side and you hang on desperately, your heart thudding. You lose 2 Strength points. At last the bridge quietens down and then pull back as the roof caves in just ahead of you. You are smothered in dust and are hit by a flying chunk of rock and take 2 Strength points loss. Shaken, you return to the junction and take the corridor North to **17**.

163

The tunnel looks highly ominous and you hear a groaning screeching like the world is collapsing. You halt and then pull back as the roof caves in just ahead of you. You are smothered in dust and are hit by a flying chunk of rock and take 2 Strength points loss. Shaken, you return to the junction and take the corridor North to **17**.

164

The zombie's rags contain only a foul smell. You may go out the North door to **138** or the East door to **52** or you may return to the first cave with the bodies and go East through the opening to **219**.

165

The two jackal-faces may be in the presence of an ugly jackal-faced idol that may mean something to them; that doesn't help them one iota when your impetuous charge hits them. They fight with their customary viciousness; but you have surprised them and hit them off balance. You fight both at once.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST JACKAL-FACE:	7	7
SECOND JACKAL-FACE:	8	6

If you defeat both turn to **58**.

166

Some way South you find a closed door on the left and the passage continues on ahead South past an opening to the West which does not interest you. If you enter the door turn to **172**. If you go on South past the West opening turn to **26**.

167

You call out but they don't hear you, so you call louder. Over their young voices you hear the snarling growls as the Wolfguards both hear and see the three neophytes. You know you have to go to their assistance and already you may have left it too late. Test Your Fate. If you Fail turn to **11**. If you succeed turn to **217**.

168

As the necromancer falls you feel a strange shudder pass all through your body. You whirl around and the walls and marble floor appear to waver and ripple like a river. In the next heartbeat they are once more firm and solid about you. The voice of Narn from the glowing oval reaches you faintly. "Justice is done and now I can return whence the Boneshaker dragged me. The Grey Ones had accepted me and stretched out their hands to me and I had passed over the Ice Floes to the sunny uplands beyond. Now I can return in peace." As you stare the beautiful woman's face is once more whole and rosy and her hair a glory about her. She shrinks and dwindles and is gone and the light dies. You feel a sharp pang of loss and tell yourself not to be stupid. You walk firmly across the marble and go in under the balcony into Stirkness Boneshaker's lair. Turn to **202**.

169

This East corridor soon ends at a bronze door and to enter turn to **74**.

170

As you come up from the South the bronze idol is even more ugly and pot-bellied than from a distance. He represents a being with smoothly-shaven head except for a pigtail, with tusks indenting his upper lips and rising at each corner of his cruel mouth, with small piggy eyes and a squat nose. He wears armour over his chest leaving his distended stomach bare. There is a large emerald in his navel. You leave this strictly alone! You turn your head to watch him as you go along East and quite soon reach a crossroads. Turn to **51**.

171

Turn to **120**.

172

In this room your torch shows up a perfectly flat and even floor of packed earth. There are doors in the East, West and North walls. There is a strong tangy smell on the air and you hear a chittering sound which fills every cranny of the chamber. Only at the last moment do you look up. A form as large as a shepherd dog with eight flailing legs is dropping on a thread directly towards you. You dodge but the giant spider swivels, his jaws and mandibles clicking, and lunges for you. If you roll two sixes your torch has caught him and the fight ends at once as he shrivels.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
GIANT SPIDER:	8	10

If you win turn to **29**.

173

Confidently you open the box of earth and hurl it at the skeletons. Again a tremendous effect is achieved as clods of earth black and rich tumble down onto the skeleton army and continue to pile up so that in no time at all every skeleton is buried deep. You glare up defiantly at Stirkness on his balcony. "So much for them! Let-em go back where they belong!" The Boneshaker lifts his arms high and his scintillant robes glitter. "I agree! Let them go where they belong. Fool! Did you think mere earth, mere burial, would finish skeletons already dead and buried and raised again?" To your horror you see bony hands clawing up through the earth like growing shoots in Spring, skulls appear, arms thrust up and the skeleton army clambers out of the grave you prepared and rattling in fury advances once more on you. You are shattered by this turn of events for you were confident the earth would bury the skeletons. You quite see the force in the Boneshaker's argument. You must find another weapon, and quickly! If you have a golden ring with a black stone with ruby lights in its depths you look at it on your finger. Perhaps this can be used as a weapon? You're willing to try anything in your desperation. You summon up your will for the effort, turn to **78**. If you do not have the ring turn to **20**.

174

Past the oak door lies a sumptuous chamber with doors to the East, West and North, filled with marvels of almost-good taste—settees, tables, screens, tapestries—everything is near-elegant and useful. You give a sigh that modern junk is modern junk. Still, you live in the world of Kónkordia and ancient junk remains ancient junk. Against a harp whose strings are broken rests the body of a young man wearing a yellow tunic and green belt and shoes. You find he has a torn piece of vellum with letters printed on it. The letters are R E N D you stand up and feel a sudden dread of the North door and you have no wish to return West so you go into the corridor through the East door. Turn to **218**.

175

The yellow glow gives you some comfort and very soon you step through an opening to enter a small room by the West sliding door. There are doors in the East and South walls. Greasy wooden tables and benches are stacked against the walls and there is a stale smell of cabbage on the air. You may step through the East door to **161** or through the South door and along the corridor to **42**.

176

The corridor goes for a short distance East and you come to the head of a broad flight of stairs. A deep and sullen red light blooms from the ceiling and as you look down you see the steps swing around to the North in a vast semicircle. You walk down this sombre and magnificent stairway feeling hidden tensions in the air mingled with the strange scent of freshly turned earth. At each end of every fifth tread is positioned a stone statue, gargoylish monsters of myth and legend, staring stoney eyed at you. As you descend you are amazed at the scale of the architecture and you keep on a long way after the curve going North until at last you reach a level passage. Further along you see in the erratic light a turning to the right going off to the East. If you go along here turn to **95**. If you continue North turn to **145**.

177

You go through and at once haul up and watch. There is

an iron gate standing open in the East wall. The gate is flanked by two guardian elephant statues. The room is otherwise empty and a ragged girl with glorious golden hair is washing the floor of this smaller room where a considerable quantity of blood has recently been spilled. Three Wolfguards stride in past the iron gate and close and lock it after them and as they make for the North door one kicks into the girl's bucket of water. There is a splash and some water and blood sprinkle the Wolfguard. He goes berserk. So do his two companions and all three start to use their rawhide whips on the girl. You may at once withdraw from this unpleasant scene and go out the lion gate, turn to **9**. Or you may wade into the three Wolfguards. If so you must fight the first two one at a time and hold off the third during each combat until you have settled with the first two and then you can deal with the third. Until then you cannot harm him but only hold him off. Remember, each Wolfguard has four arms—he gets two attacks!

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	7	9
THIRD WOLFGUARD:	8	6

If you defeat all three turn to **159**.

178

Your torch flares into life and a moment later a spear flies through the East opening and bites into your shoulder. You drop the torch and you lose 4 Strength points. In the next heartbeat two extraordinarily tough and ugly men burst in. Each has Wolf-like features, harsh and overbearing, and is dressed in brass-studded leather armour. Each carries a whip, a torch, a sword and his other hand has obviously just hurled a spear at you. You blink and have no time to wonder where the second spear went—each Wolfguard has four arms and will get two attacks per combat round. You unlimber Striketrue and the fight is on, one at a time.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	7	8

If you win turn to **196**.

179

A huge wind hurtles past tearing at your hair and then rackets off down the corridor West. You do not wish to return West so you go South and then turn East at the junction and quickly you enter a lobby. A passage comes in from the West in the South-West corner but you press on East and go through the East door to **48**.

180

You find yourself in a small square room with a door in the North. Along both sides sit huddled people, ragged and miserable, and you see they are rodent-faced folk. Slumped in misery, they take no notice of you, so you cross to the North door and go through to find a passage that immediately has a branch East. If you go North turn to **112**. If you go East turn to **211**.

181

You press on North and some way along you abruptly experience the uncomfortable sensation that someone is watching you. You swivel about; the corridor is perfectly empty between its rock walls. You move your shoulders to remove the itch between your shoulder blades and push on further North to an oak door which you open. Turn to **212**.

182

The whispering voice says "That could be anybody's hair, though I grant you the colour is right. How am I to believe you are really worth my help? If the ragged girl you helped blessed you, you will know the number of my blessings she called on, won't you?" If you know the number of blessings turn to that number. If you do not, turn to **18**.

183

The two Wolfguards are not caught napping and now you have decided that you will have to fight them they are ready for you. You have to fight them both at the same time, fight the first and hold off the second until you can deal with him. Remember each Wolfguard has four arms and so gets two attacks per combat round.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you defeat both turn to **81**.

184

You give the lever a tug and instantly a bell rings somewhere and the whole table tilts up at an angle. This so amuses you you gain a Fate point. You try the red lever but it is locked fast. Nothing else happens so you go out the West door, along a very short passage and turn South to a crossroads. Turn to **194**.

185

The large square room beyond the bronze door has doors to the North, West and East. The place is gloomy, sombre with a deathly chill. Half-seen objects shrouded in cobwebs bulk vaguely in the dimness. Your courage sinks to your boots and this makes you angry and you shake your shoulders; but the feeling of doom persists. You lose one Fate point. You hear a low and ominous hiss and you decide to leave. The East door leads to a passage, turn to **36**. The North door takes you into a corridor North, turn to **195**.

186

The corridor goes East for a short distance and reaches a crossroads. You see the South branch quickly turns West so you ignore that. From the crossroads the North branch goes for some distance and ends at a door. The East branch goes East for a slightly less distance and ends at a T-junction. If you wish to go North and enter past the door turn to **69**. If you choose to go East to the T-junction you may from there go North to **136** or South to **26**.

187

You reach the junction again, and continue on your original course East. Almost at once, you enter a small lobby with a door in the East wall. A passage joins in the South-West corner, but you go through the East door, to **48**.

188

The space beyond the jagged opening is dark and malodorous and your torch does little to dispel the gloom. There are signs of temporary occupation and on a mattress against the far wall is sprawled the body of a young woman wearing a yellow dress with green belt and shoes. You have found the mysterious companion of the youth you discovered previously. In the girl's hand is a scrap of vellum with letters printed large. The letters are I S O N.

With some care you take the vellum as it might well prove of value. You return to the passage and resume your journey towards the East. Turn to **101**.

189

The passage runs due East for some distance until you reach a turning going North. This takes you very quickly to an East-West passage. If you go West you will return to **207**. If you go East you reach a lobby with a passage joining from the West in the North-West corner. You go through the East door to **208**.

190

The instant your hand pulls the enormous door knob the pumas come to snarling life. You can't say you're surprised and you are ready for them, so you fight them, one at a time.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST PUMA:	6	8
SECOND PUMA:	7	8

If you win turn to **131**.

191

The North passage takes you into a greenly lit chamber longer East-West than it is wide North-South. As you step in a stone slab falls at your back and you see other slabs along the walls. The only exit is in the West and you begin to walk towards it. A jackal-faced man wearing armour, stiff of ears and arrogant of snout, moves forward to stop you. Turn to **46**.

192

The passage lighting improves and you walk on due West for a short distance until you reach a crossroads. The passageways all look the same with dressed stone walls and a little gutter down the centre of the floor. You may go left to **109**, right to **150**, or, straight ahead to **73**.

193

The room's East doorway gives onto a passage bathed in white light and you realize the necromancer must be very powerful, yet you must try to save the two princesses and the prince. Some way along you reach a T-junction. If you go North turn to **98**. If you go South you soon reach an oak door and to go through turn to **174**.

194

You step into the centre of the crossroads and a heavy iron grille slams down at your back. You give it a shake; but it is firmly locked. You see other iron grilles blocking all the other exits except that to the West, so West you go. Turn to **54**.

195

This is a North-South corridor and a trick of the light makes it appear shorter than it really is. Halfway along there is an opening in the East wall. At each end of the corridor is a bronze door glinting in that odd light. To go into the East opening turn to **77**. To go into the room past the North door turn to **57**. To go into the room past the South door turn to **185**.

196

The fight in the erratic torchlit dimness proved quite an experience. You wipe your sword and snatch up a fallen torch and look about. You are alone but for dead bodies. Each Wolfguard has exactly 10 copper coins and one of them has on a string around his neck a clumsy iron key whose handle is fashioned like a wolf. You may take the coins and the key if you wish and then go either West back to the first cave or East along a corridor to a junc-

tion with a passage to the North. If you go West turn to **147**. If you go East, when you reach the junction, you may then go North to **116** or continue East to **14**.

197

"That awful Stirkness has probably taken them into his lair, a most terrible place. Amints and all. Well, if you go in there it'll be on your own head." She touches your forehead as you bend down and you gain 2 Strength points. "Now let me sleep." There is a bronze door in the East wall you'd swear wasn't there before and you go through and along a short passage East until you come to another bronze door and you go through. Turn to **63**.

198

The corridor goes East and gradually the light brightens. You find a wooden door in the South wall but it is locked fast from the inside so you press on East to **59**.

199

You get a firm grip and heave and tug until the sweat starts. The grating remains fixed. You draw a ragged savage breath and give an almighty heave. The iron groans and suddenly shrieks, lifts and swings aside. You stumble out, panting, the sweat thick on your forehead. The girl in silver has not moved. When you are recovered you may return to **125** and pick another option.

200

You form your lips into a circle and blow at the swooping Amints. Instantly a rushing hurtling hurricane roars into being and envelops the multitude of winged horrors. Away they go, whirling end over end, helplessly caught in a mighty wind they are powerless to resist, smashed to bits and blown into total destruction. The Boneshaker screams his wrath. As you watch, fascinated, his human form undergoes a hideous transformation. His robe splits and from the beetle-like wingcases over his back vast black bat-wings unfurl. His face writhes and turns into a nauseating Amint horror, slavering with razor-toothed jaws, the proboscis extending, every feature blazing his evil intentions. He soars up into the air over the balcony of his rostrum and swoops down headlong towards you. He wields a double-bitted axe in both hands and he circles about you, eyes vicious, swirling the keen edges of the axe ready to lop your head. You duck down, sword held aloft, and then come up braced on wide-spread legs. You are poised alertly but you guess this will be an uneven fight for his advantages include the black arts of thaumaturgy. From nowhere a whisper ghosts into your brain. "I am Narn. Now that the Boneshaker has revealed himself I can act—but I cannot help you if you do not call on me." If you can make a phrase from the words on the scraps of vellum and elsewhere go to the number contained therein. If not, turn to **18**.

201

The door lets you into a narrow passageway that immediately turns North. You go on North for a little way and smell drying plaster and see a boney foot sticking out of the West wall. You give a little shiver and press on and step through a revolving doorway that becomes a part of the passage wall after you step out. You are in an East-West corridor and you have no desire to go back West. You head East and soon come to a large ornate door barred in bronze across the corridor. You go into the room past the door, turn to **57**.

202

Luxury and wealth are everywhere about you as you

wander through magnificent chamber after magnificent chamber, sumptuous and overpowering in the colossal outpouring riches. At last a corridor completely walled in white marble brings you to a small room with three truckle beds and little else. Three young people are chained to the beds and it takes you a long time to convince the two princesses and the prince you are a friend—even after you unshackle them. They were being reserved for some special horror of the Boneshaker's devising, that they know. You escort them back to a cosier room near the entrance and find a kitchen and prepare a famous meal and then you hear a door bang and you turn round, smiling. Turn to **225**.,

203

Panting, you glare at the three young people and they stare back curiously. Then, evidently not much caring for your tough adventurer look, they give every intention of running off. "Wait!" you call, urgent and dominating. "I am your friend against these evil beasts." They hesitate, hovering, ready to flee. You try to be clever, and telling half the truth, you say: "I have been sent to help." They look dubious, not to say sceptical at this. "Really?" says the girl in the yellow tunic. "We-ell—" says the young man. You shift your feet impatiently, as they whisper to each other, fearful that more Wolfguards will arrive. If you wish to risk continuing to wait here while they decide what to do, turn to **7**. Otherwise, you may go back to the corridor and then North to **191**.

204

You stand well out of the way of the sharp crossbow bolt and push the wire with your sword. Nothing happens. You push again and swiftly the crossbow swivels and points directly at you! You lunge sideways, feeling a fool; but your desperation is not needed. The quarrel jumps from the crossbow and tumbles to the floor. With a squeal and a sneeze a hoarse voice rustles into the room. "Is that Ashenar or perhaps Fanfrar? I know the others won't venture out." Not quite sure what to reply to this disembodied voice you wait and it wheezes on: "Oh, I see, a strapping stranger. You are not a forever damned bone shaker. Would you be a friend and help a dying elementalist?" You immediately pipe up and say you would, as someone with these powers it is best not to antagonize. Without warning the outline of a narrow door appears in the North wall. "Very well, I am prepared to trust you; but you must first tell me the number of elements I command and control to show you understand what and who I am." If you know how many elements the disembodied voice would make use of turn to that number. If you do not go out the East door and along a corridor, turn to **186**.

205

You lift the jar down and the mast gives a twitch—and is still. You let out your breath and see letters roughly scratched on the side of the jar as though done in a hurry. The letters are E T O F Now you may go through the West door where a short corridor turns right and brings you to a crossroads. Turn to **194**. Or you may try one of the remaining jars—turn to **120**

206

The screams of the girl madden you. You detest this bullying behaviour in the strong against the weak. Maybe the woman in the oval did have a skull for a face, this poor girl here and now needs help, and she needs help badly. With a rousing shout you fling yourself headlong into the fight. You will have to fight the two Wolfguards first one at a time and hold off the jackal-faced rogue. Each combat round you fight a Wolfguard and hold off jackal-face. If jackal-face's Fighting Power is greater than yours he has wounded you. You cannot harm him until you have a acounted for both Wolfguards. Remember, because the Wolfguards have four arms they get two attacks per round against your one. You fight the two Wolfguards one after the other, each round holding off Jackal-face and when you have finished both Wolfguards you can deal with Jackal-face—the rogue!

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	6
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	7	8
JACKAL-FACE:	9	6

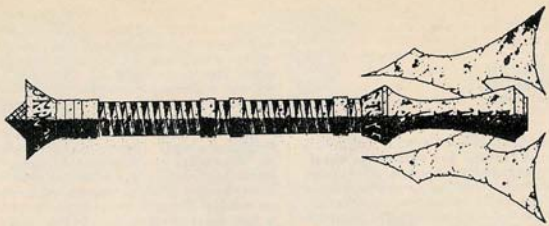
If you defeat all three turn to **34**.

207

The door opens into a larger room than any you've ventured into so far. There are two doors in each of the North, South and East walls. A pale lemon light drifts down from the ceiling which is partially obscured by drifting motes of colour. You can smell a light refreshing scent on the air; but the whole room is in disorder with valuable furniture scattered everywhere and priceless carpets just thrown higgledy-piggledy down. Near the centre lie the bodies of four Wolfguards all ripped and torn and by them the body of a huge shaggy dog bearing the marks of sword cuts. Just to the side lies the body of a young man clad in a yellow tunic with green belt and shoes. The scene is simple, stark and sickening. The youth's outstretched hand is reaching up as though for help or, perhaps, as though commanding a companion to flee. But through which of the six doors this mysterious colleague ran is impossible to judge. As you look at each wall in turn, you see that in the North wall you may go through the left hand door to **74** or the right hand door to **152**. In the East wall you may go through the left hand door to **189** or the right hand door to **89**. In the South wall you may go through the left hand door to **22** or the right hand door to **172**.

208

This door gives onto a chamber large and gloomy filled with rustlings and echoes and the raw smell of wild animals. You are relieved to see another door in the East wall. Your torch does little to illuminate the dimness and the sense of this evil labyrinth into which you have ventured begins to jangle your nerve endings. You begin



to feel decidedly twitchy and realize this feeling has been working up and up inside you until you want to run and scream. You grit your teeth and begin to calm down. Turn to **193**.

209

The North corridor reaches a T-junction. In the mouth of the left hand passage is a ginning skull, and the air is damp. You decide not to go that way. You go along right to **40**.

210

From the corner the passage runs East for a few paces to a junction with a passage going off South. Ahead further along to the East is a large and ornate door across the passage. barred in bronze. To go South from the junction turn to **125**. To go into the room past the bronze door turn to **57**.

211

The East corridor quickly brings you to a turning North. You go a few paces North and see a greenly-lit opening at the North end of the corridor. You walk on and see recessed double doors on the right and just as you reach them a pair of Wolfguards strut jauntily out of the green-lit opening and you make a convulsive leap into the right hand opening of the double doors. You squeeze into the angle and peer through the gap between door and jamb in dark shadow. The Wolfguards halt and start to talk with a great deal of sniggering laughing. From your back you hear voices raised in argument and you carefully turn around keeping in the shadow to see three young people walking out of the dimly lit room from the East, unaware of the near presence of Wolfguards. A young man and a young woman wearing yellow tunics with green belts and shoes are amicably arguing with a raggedy girl in a once beautiful dress. Her hair is corngold. You have not seen her before. The argument may be friendly; but all three are becoming excited. They will soon walk out of the double doors past the door where you are hiding. You may wait until they have gone, turn to **93**. You may call a warning to them, turn to **167**. Or you may rush out and tackle the two Wolfguards, turn to **68**.

212

The room past the oak door is of reasonable size with doors to the West, South and East. Most of the space is taken up by lumber. As you cross the room you notice a small piece of pink ribbon. When you pick it up and examine it you notice the jagged ends and the sparkle of the gold thread running through. You feel a dash of excitement. This must be a piece of the ribbon from Princess Taleens's new dress given to her by her mother, and the princess is ripping pieces off and dropping them as clues. This heartens you considerably. You feel you must push on in a Eastern direction so you ignore the South and West doors and go through the East door and along the corridor to **107**.

213

Test Your Fate. If you Fail turn to **183**. If you Succeed turn to **156**.

214

Quickly you snatch out the vial of water and twist off the stopper and then—hoping for a miracle—hurl it straight into the flashing flame before you. If you expected a sprinkle of water you are disappointed. A waterfall sprouts and pours in an arc spuming with foam and with an enormous ear-battering noise in an irresistible torrent over the flames and they hiss like ten thousand snakes and die. Stirkness Boneshaker draws himself up arrogantly. "So you think to counter my powers with your puny borrowed efforts? Then my children shall destroy you!" Turn to **154**.

215

Looking at the ruin of the doorway you reflect that a lady who can put up and knock down walls as easily as this must be a very puissant young lady indeed and one well worth being careful of. Among the rubble you see a glint and bend to pick up a neat little golden ring set with a black stone that glints in its depths with ruby fire. Inscribed inside the golden hoop is the name Ashenar. You may now leave via the East door to **119** or squeeze through the narrow opening in the rubble North to **72**.

216

As you turn around in frustration and barge out of the South door you run smack into two Wolfguards just entering. Instantly their swords screech from their scabbards and their spears thrust for you. You are just as quick as they are and in the doorway you can tackle them one at a time. At once you are at handstrokes.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	7	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you defeat both turn to **21**.

217

Hoping you are not too late you rush out and charge. You fight one at a time.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
FIRST WOLFGUARD:	8	8
SECOND WOLFGUARD:	8	8

If you win turn to **203**.

218

The short corridor ends in a T-junction and looking South you see an enormous door with massive iron reinforcements a few paces down. The door refuses to open and you give it a kick – still nothing happens – so you turn North and go past the West passage you came from and quite quickly you run into a roof fall. The corridor is completely blocked but a new and very short passage has been driven to the East just before the block. You go East to a closed door and hear sobbing from the other side. You give the door a push and it swings open and you step through. Turn to **28**.

219

You just have time to see you are in a crudely cut square cave with a door opening to the East and more bodies sprawled on the rough floor when you hear a distant door bang and a sudden gust of wind extinguishes your torch. For a moment you hold your breath tensely in the close darkness. You lose one Fate point. Through the East opening you see two flickering lights and realize these are torches being held high. From the same direction you hear a shuffling sound approaching you. If you relight your torch turn to **178**. If you crouch down beside a body near the West opening turn to **92**. If you grope your way back West into the first cave turn to **127**.

220

Through the iron door you enter a comfortable chamber with a huge four poster bed and amenities. The woman in the bed is old but she has a motherly presence and her eyes twinkle on you although she is clearly afraid of the outside labyrinth where until recently the elementalist and his acolytes lived in such palatial splendour. She clicks her tongue when you ask about the children but cannot help you there. "Although one of the neophytes told me something about scraps of pink ribbon here and there; but I really didn't understand." She leans back in the bed. "They'll never find Narn," she whispers. When you ask about Narn she sits up but instead says: "My master entrusted me with Earth and it is possible that might help you." She touches your hands and gives you a small wooden box of earth, rich and black. "Remember, you can only use Earth once. Now go and leave me in piece, for I am old and fear the future." You thank her and return through the iron door and go North through the wooden door which locks itself after you. You turn East in the corridor and start to worry about your torch. Turn to **59**.

221

Amints! Hundreds of them, flapping their black wings from their beetle wingcases hideous features writhing in anticipation of your destruction they sweep down on you. Many carry barbed weapons. If you have a wooden box of earth you hurl this at them in a frenzy and clots and clumps of rich dark earth spill over them. Agilely they dodge in the air and as the earth piles up uselessly there is no time for you to think of or do anything else. The Amints plunge down and this is the end of your adventure.

222

"We believe Narn will help us," says the girl in the yellow tunic taking something out of her mouth, "even if she is as she is. Things like that change people." "That's right," chips in the ragged girl. "Narn was wife and helpmeet to Stirkness Boneshaker under his thrall but they parted company by reason of her untimely death. He raised her up, of course, having the necromantic power, quite easily but he bungled the task and didn't get her head quite right." The girl speaks with heavy emphasis. **"Narn is one who prophesies our doom."** "Yes," puts in the young man, "we've been told to find the torn up words telling us how to reach her. All the neophytes are looking." The girl in green shoes holds out her hand to show the piece of vellum. "I hid this in my mouth when the trouble started." The printed letters are N A R N "If only we had the rest we'd know how to appeal to her at the right time and then she'd have her revenge on the Boneshaker." "She never did like him," says the ragged girl, positively. "We're sure you must go West; but we're arguing about the best way–" The young man breaks off in alarm as the sound of many iron-shod sandals and the clink of weapons herald many Wolfguards and jackal-faces marching through the room from the East and up the corridor from the South. The three young people let out muffled little screams and rush North inside the room evidently knowing a way to go. You want to go West and the best way is to run North up the corridor and enter the greenly lit chamber at the North end going West. Turn to **191**.

223

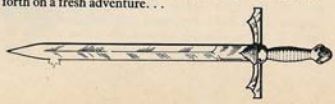
The corridor goes North to a T-junction and you hope the stone will remain firm about you. You ignore the way West and turn East and quickly reach a door and go through to **69**.

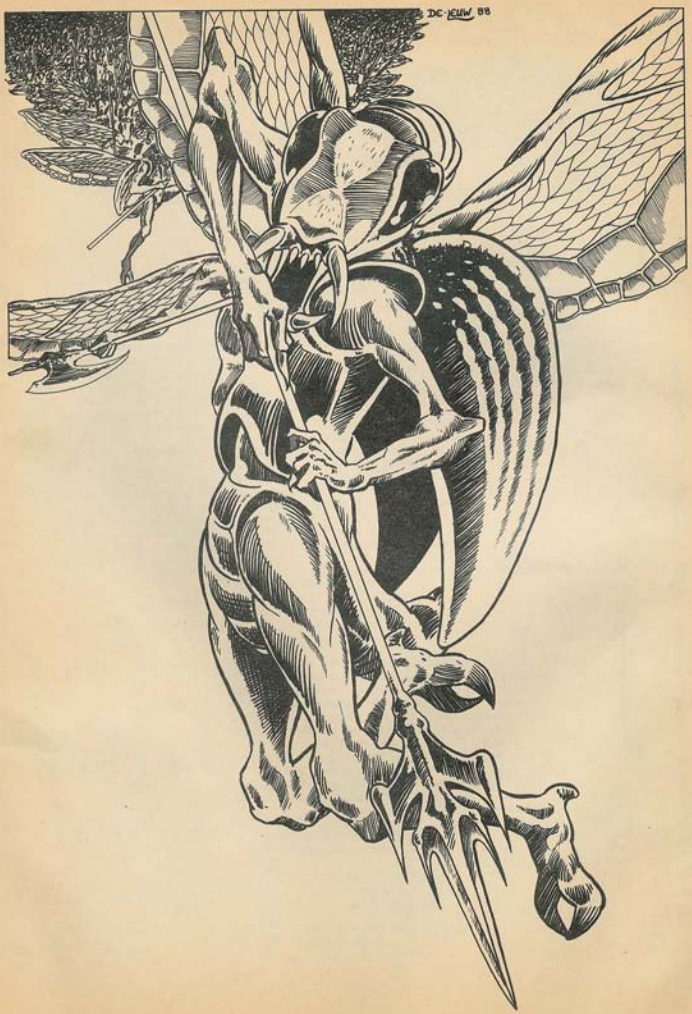
224

The door opens easily and shuts and locks itself at your back. In the corridor you start to worry about your torch. You go along East to **59**.

225

A group of people enter. They are all flushed and excited and yet you see they are saddened by the loss of so many fine young neophytes. At their head is Flavian, quite clearly nowhere near death's door. All his people look rejuvenated and you guess he has taken back his personal command of Air, Earth, Fire and Water. Ashenar steps forward holding out her hand. Again you are struck by her beauty. "My ring" she says, and with a smile you hand it over. "We thank you for delivering us from this great evil of the Boneshaker and his monstrous creatures and guards who are all vanished away like smoke," says the Elementalist. "And we are happy that you have found the lost children. All in all, a happy outcome." "Yes," you say. "And I must deliver the two princesses and the prince to their parents. My own people and Jolly Jim will be anxious." You are well aware, and the Elementalist as well, that you and your crew will be back to sample some of the marvellous treasures here. A good job well done deserves good payment and you have done a good job and you will receive a fabulous reward. The gold and jewels might last just long enough until you fare forth on a fresh adventure. . .

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MESSAGES from BEYOND

Dear PROTEUS,

I have noticed over the last few months that the general quality of your magazine is very good. However, one thing bugs me—some of your letters are just ***TOO*** serious. I mean, who cares if PROTEUS is a fantasy magazine? Look at Fighting Fantasy—they have published several good quality sci-fi scenarios, even though the word 'Fantasy' appears in their title.

How about a PROTEUS competition? Good idea hey?! You could give a small prize for the best letter of the month. Another idea could be to publish a PROTEUS calendar for next year, containing all the best artwork from past issues.

Congratulations are in order for the story in issue No. 18. It was of a very high standard and I thoroughly enjoyed playing the adventure. One thing I must know—has Terry Oakes got a fixation about saliva? Most of his artwork has consisted of drooling animals.

The Master,
Hollywood,
Birmingham.

In our PROTEUS Special—see page 1—when we shall indeed be giving a prize for the most interesting letter published in 'Messages from Beyond', the winner will receive a PROTEUS sweatshirt for their efforts—so get writing! The letters will be judged by a panel of witches, warlocks, orcs, trolls and nasty little hobgoblins who make up the bulk of our editorial staff—so with this in mind, you are probably more likely to win if your letter ISN'T just full of praise for PROTEUS! We want to hear your news, views, moans and groans—do you think ***you*** *could be our first winner?*

Dear PROTEUS,

Having read issue No. 17 and the debate on sci-fi adventures in PROTEUS, I have decided to add my views on the argument.

Sci-fi stories SHOULD be printed in your magazine, if only to add a little variety. If every adventure was a fantasy scenario, PROTEUS would eventually become quite boring no matter how good the stories were.

For even more variety, how about adding a few real life adventures? I am an avid wargamer, of both the board and computer, and would be only too pleased to contribute good, historically detailed wartime adventures.

Stuart Hardy,
Sheffield.

So what do YOU think readers? Should we slip in the odd sci-fi adventure for variety? And would you like to see wartime adventures in PROTEUS? The sci-fi v. fantasy debate has so far received a very similar response both for and against—so why not send us a 'Yes' for sci-fi or a 'No' for pure fantasy and we'll publish the results of a readers' poll.

Dear PROTEUS,

How many readers can say they buy PROTEUS for the artwork alone? I do for one! You are indeed blessed with some talented artists. The front cover illustration (No. 17) of 'Black Crag Castle' by N. Blanchard is a masterpiece! The satanic appearance of the castle silhouetted against a blood-red sunset, and the hellish creatures hovering above the evil mist or erupting out of the sea all helps to create a chilling scene from our worst nightmares.

As for the artwork inside, Paul Campbell is absolutely fantastic! His drawings are always exceptionally detailed and life-like—a truly talented artist.

So you see, PROTEUS is well worth 95p for its artwork alone. The adventure game is an added bonus!

Andrew Field,
Sunderland,
Tyne & Wear.

We're (gulp) touched by your kind words Andrew. Have you ever considered a career in public relations?

Dear PROTEUS,

I am a recent newcomer to your magazine and would like to say a few words about it. Firstly, the game itself; it's a relief to have a fighting fantasy game in this cheaper form—more accessible for everyone.

Secondly, why do you print such degrading rubbish in your 'Rogue's Gallery'—or don't you get any good pictures?

Thirdly, why not print the 'Black Queen' in colour—she'd make a great PROTEUS poster! The games are all good—once I've started one I'm addicted!

PS: I enclose a picture for the 'Rogue's Gallery'.

G. W. Seman,
Norwich,
Norfolk.

Your comments on 'Rogue's Gallery' have no bearing on the fact your picture was not selected for publication! We receive artwork from readers of all ages and some of the younger ones show promising talent. However, we are still receiving many pictures, like yours, which have been drawn in pencil—not black ink—and unfortunately, we are unable to reproduce them in the magazine.

Dear PROTEUS,

Why not put a page of spells at the beginning of each issue, which can be used in the adventures and would spice up the magazine. I agree with Raistlin the Mage (issue No. 17) that you should print a horror adventure brimming with blood, gore and well, need I go on?

PS: Do you have to draw a picture for 'Rogue's Gallery' in order to get your letter printed?

Lee Clarke,
St. Albans, Herts.

Certainly not!

PEN PALS

Looking for a boy aged between 11-13, interested in Tolkien, Lonewolf and Citadel miniatures.
Damian Lewis,
Berrywood Cottage,
Nr. Ryton,
Condover,
Shropshire SY5 7NR.

I am questing for a pen-person, male or female, aged 15+; fantasy and sci-fi (M.E.R.D., Judge Dredd, etc.).
Contact Leonard O'Grady,
Ballinegarde,
Ballyneety,
Limerick,
Ireland.

Rogue's Gallery

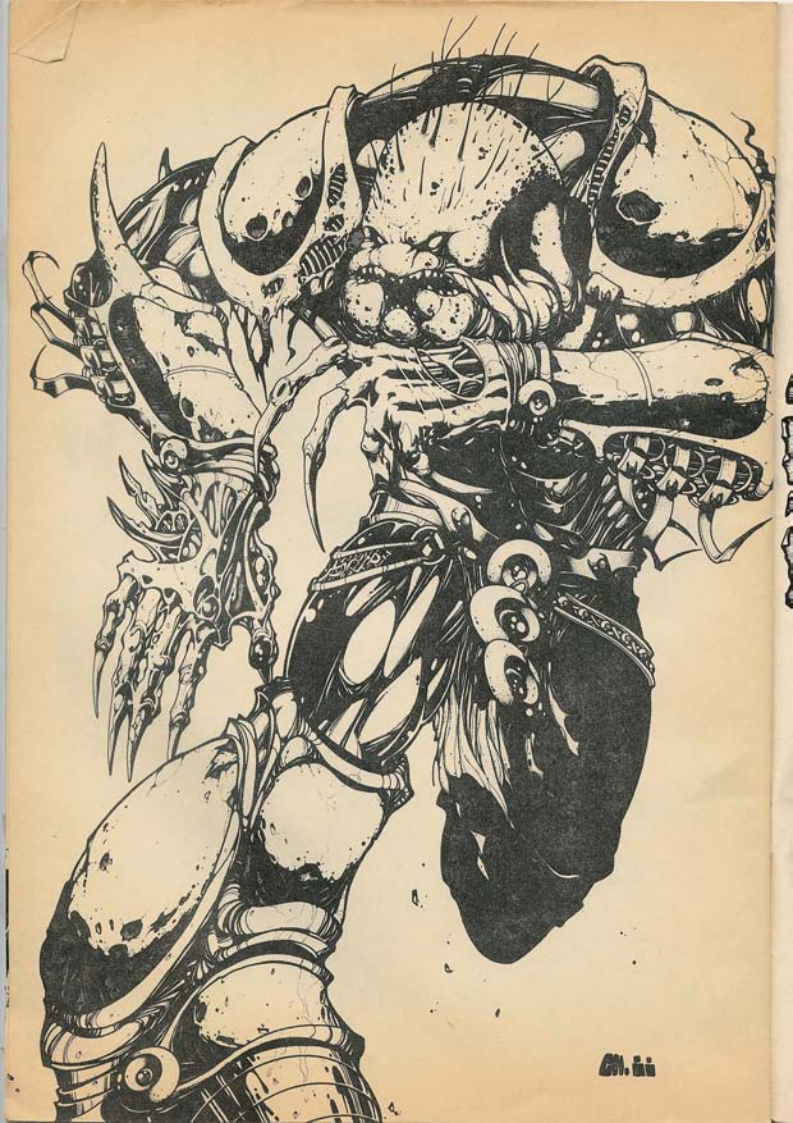
Once again, our 'Rogue's Gallery' of monsters, weaponry and other gruesome figments of fantasy, as drawn by our very talented readers. Keep 'em coming!

Above right: 'Ninja Master' and left, 'Steel Claw and Strong-Horn' by R. Stevens, Exeter, Devon.

Right: 'The Silent One' by Gary White, St. Neots, Cambs.

Below: Michael Forgeard, Dorchester, Dorset.

Left: Philip George, Oxford.



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